

*WOMEN AT THE  
THESMOPHORIA*

## INTRODUCTION

*Women at the Thesmophoria* was probably first staged at the Dionysia festival of 411, at a time (late March, early April) of exceptional significance in the history of classical Athens. This was the very period when a political faction was plotting radical, anti-democratic changes in the government of the city, changes that would materialize that summer as the short-lived oligarchic revolution of the Four Hundred.<sup>1</sup> Athens had been in a state of heightened political tension ever since the calamitous failure in late summer 413 of the expedition to Sicily and the various consequences of that failure (including the revolt of several allied cities in 412). But the situation had become acute in late 412, when the conspiratorial faction in question was beginning seriously to mobilize itself both at Athens and among leading figures stationed with the Athenian fleet at Samos in the eastern Aegean.<sup>2</sup> Before long, events took a sinister turn: a number of political assassinations in the city helped to fuel a general mood of fear and anxiety. Not a context, one might think, which would lend itself readily to the creation of comic drama.

Yet, rather remarkably, Aristophanes actually had *two* plays in rehearsal during late 412 and early 411.<sup>3</sup> One, *Lysistrata*, was prepared for performance (at the Lenaia, in early February 411) by Kallistratos, who had produced several of Aristophanes' earlier plays as well; the other, *Women at the Thesmophoria* itself, was presumably under the control (as *didaskalos*: chorus-trainer and director) of Aristophanes in person. Is it coincidence that both plays, unlike all the poet's earlier surviving works, have scenarios in which female characters—though not, of course, female performers (since chorus-members as well as actors were all male)—have prominent roles? Is it

<sup>1</sup> For the chronology of the period in relation to the writing and staging of *Women at the Thesmophoria*, see C. Austin and S. D. Olson, *Aristophanes Thesmophoriazousae* (Oxford, 2004), pp. xxxiii–xliv.

<sup>2</sup> Thucydides 8.47–69 gives the main sequence of events, but Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia* 29–32 contains some significant differences of emphasis. For one modern reconstruction, see P. J. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2010), 169–75.

<sup>3</sup> Plays selected for Athenian dramatic festivals were rehearsed over a period of months, during which some changes could be made: cf. n. 3 to my Introduction to *Frogs*.

possible that this fact represents a strategy for a kind of comic 'flight from politics' during the mounting tension and uncertainty of the period?

Matters cannot be quite so simple. *Lysistrata* is, on one level, a highly political play: indeed, rather ironically, a play about a kind of 'oligarchic' conspiracy in the city (and, supposedly, in all the cities of the Greek world), only a conspiracy where the plotters are *women* and their primary levers of power are sexual.<sup>4</sup> The result, from a political point of view, is an ambiguous tease. There is, on the other hand, something to be said for the idea that *Women at the Thesmophoria* is a decidedly non-political comedy—arguably, in fact, the least politically engaged of all Aristophanes' surviving works. There is just one section of the play which might be thought to carry some pointed resonance in the circumstances of early 411. This is where the women convene their special meeting at the Thesmophoria in a manner reminiscent of the meetings of the city's regular Assembly (*ekklesiá*). At 335–7 the chorus-leader's solemn proclamation includes a curse on anyone who 'plots against the community [*démos*, the 'people'] . . . or makes clandestine approach | To . . . the Medes . . .' (i.e. the Persians, an alliance with whom was part of the oligarchs' plan at this date).

Two things, however, mute the force of this passage: one, that it echoes the regular curses delivered at the start of Assembly meetings; the other, that the chorus-leader says ' . . . the community | *Of the city's women*' and ' . . . clandestine approach | *To Euripides and the Medes . . .*'. In other words, any allusion that might be detected here to contemporary oligarchic plottings is not only fleeting but instantly smudged, as it were, by the fantasy of the comic scenario. When the whole chorus reinforces their leader's curses by targeting those 'whose aim is that all decrees and laws | Be overturned and replaced' (361–2), there is further scope to catch a specifically contemporary resonance, though the oligarchs themselves did not in fact present their proposals in terms of a complete overturning of existing laws. But such resonance is in any case optional (spectators would vary in their sensitivity to it), and is heavily outweighed by the specifics of the Thesmophoria setting and the female ambience of the scene. Whatever Aristophanes' own views may have been in 412–411,

<sup>4</sup> *Lysistrata* herself, at 577–8, refers disparagingly to political 'clubs' of the kind which Thucydides 8.54.4 indicates were drawn into the planning of the oligarchic coup in 411.

he made sure that *Women at the Thesmophoria* almost entirely steered clear of the fraught political issues of the period.<sup>5</sup>

What he produced, instead, can be firmly located on the broad spectrum of his comic repertoire. The play is nothing less than the first surviving Western comedy to be centred on the dynamics of metatheatre, the self-conscious framing of 'life' as quasi-theatrical.<sup>6</sup> The scenario is built on the basic idea that the (supposed) nature of Euripides' tragedies has rebounded against the playwright in his own life. The women of Athens have taken offence at the alleged misogyny of Euripides' treatment of female characters and have resolved to discuss some kind of revenge against him when they meet at the women-only festival of the Thesmophoria. Somehow alerted to the danger in advance, Euripides has decided that he needs a *man* to infiltrate the Thesmophoria in disguise on his behalf. Accompanied (for what rapidly show themselves to be reasons of comic convenience) by an elderly and decidedly vulgar Kinsman, he turns first, in the play's opening scene, to his younger and allegedly effeminate fellow-tragedian Agathon to undertake this task for him. Although Agathon refuses, the idea allows a further level of comic metatheatricality to be introduced: dramatists, it is understood (and Agathon has something to say about this for his own reasons: see below), are adept at conjuring up imaginative worlds, so why should they not be good at using their fictionalizing skills to manipulate the 'real' world as well?

After Euripides' Kinsman has reacted to Agathon's refusal by offering to be the secret infiltrator himself, Agathon is at any rate willing to lend some female attire and appurtenances for the role, thereby simultaneously underlining his credentials as both a feminine man (who really *uses* such things himself) and a dramatist (who needs them for his stock of costumes and theatrical props). Reliance on the Kinsman, who shows himself in the opening scene to be shamelessly vulgar and buffoonish, will inevitably prove disastrous. But it will also provide an excuse for both him and Euripides to close the circle of

<sup>5</sup> One other passage, at 962–4 (see my note there), might even be taken as an explicit signal that the play will avoid political comment at a time of heightened tensions in the city.

<sup>6</sup> Aristophanes' older rival Kratinos had earlier (in 423) gone a step further and written a play, *Wine-Flask* (*Putine*), in which he metatheatrically made a plot out of his *own* life as comic playwright: full discussion in E. Bakola, *Cratinus* (Oxford, 2010), esp. 59–64, 275–85.

metatheatricity, so to speak, by enacting parts of Euripides' plays 'in life' in an attempt to bring about the Kinsman's rescue. *Women at the Thesmophoria* turns into a work in which Euripides' life becomes a scripted drama amalgamated from several of his own tragedies. Yet that process of scripting is also an ironic transformation of tragedy into comedy.

The 'Euripidean' plot through which that is achieved unfolds in a sequence of gradually intensifying stages: first, the disguised Kinsman's misdirected attempts to defend Euripides' reputation with the women and his consequent unmasking as a man (466–654); then, his Telephos-like 'kidnap' of a woman's baby (689 ff.; see below) and his resort to motifs from Euripides' *Palamedes* (765 ff.) and *Helen* (849 ff.); finally, a series of interventions by Euripides in person with the aim of rescuing his relative (868–1231). As a way into all this, as well as a kind of preamble to it, Aristophanes takes full advantage, just as he does in *Lysistrata*, of the opportunity to generate comedy from the notion of opening up a secret female gathering to the prying eyes of men (i.e. the overwhelming majority of his audience).<sup>7</sup> The resulting cast of humour is—once again as in *Lysistrata*—double-sided: it involves exaggeratedly cynical male stereotypes of female behaviour, but also the simultaneous assimilation of women to *men* in certain respects. In consequence, there is no simple or consistent 'gender politics' to be inferred from this aspect of the play, or of Aristophanic comedy more broadly.

The quintessentially Aristophanic blurring and confusion of categories, in this case male and female, is set in train by the fluctuating tone and style of the women's meeting. We have already seen that part of the section of ritual prayers (298–371) which initiates the festival gathering simultaneously echoes and travesties prayers for the welfare of Athens which formed part of the ritualized preliminaries of Assembly meetings. By, for instance, bracketing together Euripides and the Persians as though they were similar types of threatening enemies (337), or by similarly swerving from fears of tyranny to a string of scenarios involving surrogate babies, adultery, and

<sup>7</sup> As it happens, *Women at the Thesmophoria* itself contains a prime piece of evidence that Athenian women did not normally attend the theatre: 395–7, though a joke, takes for granted that most husbands attended without their wives (cf. *Birds* 793–6). See the general Introduction, n. 32.

cheating innkeepers (338–49), the chorus-leader speaks in a hybrid register. Shortly afterwards, the women start to hold their business meeting—more precisely, start to conduct their business (on the absurd motion of what kind of punishment is to be pronounced on Euripides) in a manner blatantly modelled on a session of the city's political Assembly or *ekklésia*, with an 'agenda' set by a prior meeting of the (women's) Council (372–77) and an invitation to speak (379) of the kind which the Herald formulaically announced in the Assembly. The first speaker, Mika, comes forward and prepares to speak, no doubt with parodic gestures, just like 'real orators' (382), launching herself into an attack on Euripides for his supposed misogyny with a vehemence and accumulation of devices (e.g. the rhetorical questions of 389–94) that do have something in common with the habits of contemporary oratory.

Such points, however, form only the most obvious components of comic gender-jumbling. More subtly, when Mika complains that Euripides depicts women as adulterers, drinkers, and schemers, part of the humour consists in toying with men's own suspicious stereotypes (hence, for example, the ludicrous vignette of husbands coming home from the tragic theatre and searching the house for hidden lovers, 395–7), and part in the gradual, unconscious admissions by Mika herself of women's (supposedly) secret vices (398, 407–9, 419–25). How can one extract a consistent viewpoint from these comically intersecting premises? What's more, all this is mixed together, even more self-contradictorily, with a growing sense of metatheatricity. Mika finishes her speech on one level like a male public speaker (undertaking to consult with the scribe on the precise wording of a decree, 432), but on quite a different level with the suggestion that the women should consider *poisoning* Euripides (430)—itself a motif found in several Euripidean plays!

This layered humour, which adds up to a rich texture that an audience in the theatre would intuitively appreciate without a need for analysis, is cemented once the Kinsman comes forward to speak (466–519). We now have (i) a male character impersonating a woman who (ii) both complains about Euripides and, as Mika had done, ironically admits female faults, but (iii) also presents a persona which reflects exaggeratedly male stereotypes and jokes (e.g. an obscene anecdote of the very young bride and her nocturnal tryst with a lover, 478–89; or a preposterous folktale-like story of the wife hiding a lover

behind a cloak, 499), and, finally, (iv) all this in a speech which borrows from one of Euripides' own plays, *Telephos* (see below).

Once Aristophanes has activated these various comic elements, he continues to combine and recombine them in shifting ways. Several are present in the 'slanging match' (cf. 571) into which the confrontation between the Kinsman (still purportedly a woman at this point) and Mika degenerates (531–73). They are then given a new embodiment in the figure of Kleisthenes, who rushes onto the scene at 574 to warn the women of a rumour that a man has infiltrated their festival. Kleisthenes had already been the butt of a passing joke at 235, a miniature anticipation of things to come. Satirized in all three plays in this volume, he was a favourite target of Aristophanes' mockery over many years.<sup>8</sup> How and why he came to be so readily available for jokes about effeminate appearance and passive homosexual habits, we cannot now know. But since he was probably in life no mere object of ridicule but a socially and politically active figure of at least a minor kind, he suits the present context perfectly: adding his own contribution to the gender-confusions of the play, he behaves *both* as a 'friend' of women (574–6) *and* as someone who knows how to liaise urgently with the Council (654) and operate the mechanisms of democracy. He even helps sustain the play's metatheatrical dimension, since the urgency of his entrance and information carries overtones of the conventions of tragic messenger-speeches.

The upshot of Kleisthenes' intervention and the subsequent interrogation of the Kinsman is a 'mirror-scene' corresponding to the latter's original shaving and cross-dressing by Euripides. In a sense this forms the climax of the first half of the play. It brings to a head the whole business of gender-blurring by reducing it to its most basic (comic) constituent, the actor's phallus (643 ff.). (So much for Aristophanes' supposed boast at *Clouds* 537–9 that he was not the sort of playwright to resort to vulgar phallic humour for the sake of making the boys in the theatre audience laugh.) Nor is this the last moment in the play at which the phallus will be brought into action: the Skythian Archer points to the Kinsman's phallus again at 1114, and the Archer's own phallus will spring lewdly into life in the very last scene (1187).

But the exposure of the Kinsman's manhood is not the end of his play-acting. On the contrary, his capture by the women is the cue for the

<sup>8</sup> See the entry on him in the Index of Names.

comedy's metatheatricity, and with it the Kinsman's shifting identity, to assume enlarged proportions. From now on, starting with the *Telephos* parody at 689 ff. (see below), almost everything in the dramatic action is filtered through quasi-Euripidean frames of reference. Comedy is now 'rescripted' as (pseudo-) tragedy, and vice versa: the second half of *Women at the Thesmophoria* turns into Aristophanes' most elaborate (surviving) exercise in paratragedy, the comic adaptation and burlesquing of tragic materials. It is not for the most part productive to try to distinguish paratragedy from parody of tragedy, if only because parody itself is a notoriously elastic and slippery category of humour. The workings of paratragedy necessarily deflate the tragic originals from which they take their bearings, stripping them of their solemnity and seriousness, not to mention their darker moments. But whether or how far Aristophanes' manipulation (on a spectrum running from verbatim quotation to extravagant distortion) of Euripidean language, characters, and situations should be taken to direct mockery against those originals themselves is not a question that admits of an easy answer: maybe not even a question one can meaningfully pose at all. One thing we can say for sure is that paratragedy on the scale and in the detail practised by Aristophanes could only have been produced in a theatrical culture where tragedy and comedy existed side by side for overlapping (though not identical) festival audiences. In other words, the rich and extensive paratragic colouring of *Women at the Thesmophoria* presupposes spectators who, as also in the case of the second half of *Frogs*, were highly knowledgeable about, and appreciative of, tragedy in its own right: both plays would be largely stultifying for audiences of whom that was not true. We are dealing here with paratragedy for connoisseurs of drama.

That does not mean, however, that Aristophanes could have expected his audience to have uniform familiarity with the particular Euripidean sources he draws on in this play. He must have allowed for mixed experience on the part of spectators: some would have seen (some of) the plays in question performed, others might have heard reports of them, and a few might even have had access (as Aristophanes himself clearly did) to texts.<sup>9</sup> The two prerequisites for appreciation of paratragedy which he could depend on a majority of

<sup>9</sup> The size of the 'reading public' for tragedy in the late fifth century remains impossible to calculate. Cf. Dionysos as reader at *Frogs* 52–3, with the (disputed) reference to play-texts at *Frogs* 1114 and my notes on both passages.



spectators possessing are, first, an accumulated stock of familiarity with tragedy in general as a theatrical and poetic genre, and therefore a ready attunement to the various games which he plays with its conventions and stylistic registers; secondly, a reasonable knowledge of (or an ability to pick up quickly) at least the core mythological subject-matter of the scenarios which he 'borrows' from Euripides (and/or makes Euripides 'borrow' from himself).

We can apply those basic points by considering briefly in turn the four main blocks of paratragedy in the second half of *Women at the Thesmophoria*.<sup>10</sup>

(I) 689–761. *Parody of a scene from Euripides' Telephos*<sup>11</sup>

Several features of this case are thought-provoking. *Telephos*, originally staged in 438, was by far the oldest of the four Euripidean plays concerned here: even spectators who had seen that production twenty-seven years earlier would have struggled to remember it well. Yet the play is the only one of the four which is not actually named in Aristophanes' text but is still expected to be readily identifiable. The essentials of *Telephos*'s story must have been quite widely known; several other tragedians of the period had based plays on the myth. Moreover, the particular Euripidean scene in question, where *Telephos* seized the baby Orestes as 'hostage' while defending himself against the Greeks, could have been a memorable *coup de théâtre* in its own right, and certainly lent itself to visually striking burlesque in the form of the Kinsman's kidnapping of Mika's 'baby' (which turns out to be a wineskin, symbol of the stereotype—the theme of numerous jokes in the play—of Athenian wives as secret drinkers).<sup>12</sup> We certainly know that the plot of *Telephos* appealed strongly to Aristophanes' imagination, since he had already parodied it much earlier in his career at several places in *Acharnians* (with the seizure of the Acharnian chorus's coal-scuttle at 325–34 corresponding to the Kinsman's present action with the wineskin). But in contrast to both *Acharnians* and the further blocks of paratragedy discussed below, the

<sup>10</sup> Fuller information on all this material can be found in Austin and Olson's edition (n. 1), pp. lvi–lxiv. <sup>11</sup> Cf. the Index of Names, s.v. *Telephos*.

<sup>12</sup> See the depiction of this scene on a fourth-century Apulian vase cited in my general Introduction, 'Aristophanes and Posterity', with n. 91 there.

current passage contains no verbally close borrowings or adaptations from Euripides' text: it is the visual-cum-thematic features of the scenario which constitute the main vectors of humour.

For the more acute (and well-informed) members of Aristophanes' audience, there would be additional nuances to appreciate. We can see in retrospect that the *Telephos*, as a source of paratragedy, has been lurking in the background for some time: the Kinsman's disguise and infiltration of the women's meeting is analogous to the Mysian king's disguised infiltration of the Greeks' assembly at Argos. The analogy came closer to the foreground at 466 ff., as several resemblances to Dikaiopolis' *Telephos*-speech at *Acharnians* 497 ff. confirm. So when the Kinsman seizes Mika's baby at 689 and takes refuge at the altar, paratragedy fuses with metatheatre: it is as if the Kinsman's paratragic engagement with the *Telephos* reflects his dependence on Euripidean plot-resources for self-defence in a moment of crisis. The pattern will soon be repeated. And the metatheatrical dimension will increasingly assume an ironic slant: despite all his buffoonery and maladroitness impersonation of a woman, it turns out that the Kinsman has the instincts of a tragic actor! Even so, his resort to the *Telephos* does not save him: he is now trapped at the altar under the guard of the women.

(II) 765–84. *Parody of a scene from Euripides' Palamedes*

The Kinsman's *Telephos*-like role with Mika's baby did not give him a means of escape; it merely staved off the immediate reprisals of the women and helped him seek 'sanctuary' at the altar. Now, apparently warming to his function as a vehicle of Euripidean metatheatricity, he consciously ponders a means of rescue and recalls the scene from *Palamedes* in which the eponymous hero's brother, Oiax, scratched a message on oars which he threw into the sea at Troy in the hope that they would find their way to his father. Aristophanes bases this next phase of paratragedy on a much more recent play; *Palamedes* had been staged only four years earlier, in 415, though that by no means implies that all spectators of the comedy would have seen it. Once again, however, he focuses on a peculiar dramatic moment, and one which lends itself to visual absurdity and hence a degree of comic effectiveness even for those who did not know Euripides' original play in any detail. Spectators need only be capable of grasping the

story of Oiax's message (which may or may not have been unique to Euripides' version) once they are told about it, which happens explicitly at 769–71.

What follows may in fact have had no exact equivalent in Euripides' play, since we do not know that Oiax's action was staged rather than simply described.<sup>13</sup> In any case, the paratragic reworking of the scene combines two clear strands: first, the clumsy physical action with which the Kinsman carves a message on wooden dedicatory tablets with his knife (the one with which he had killed Mika's 'baby') and then flings the tablets as though he were sending them as messengers through the streets (cf. 783–4); secondly, the short solo song he sings, in pseudo-tragic self-consciousness (776–84), while doing so. Adding song to speech expands the Kinsman's performative repertoire as a would-be tragic actor; it also makes all the more ironic the distance he has travelled since his original mockery of the poet Agathon's tragic songs in the first scene of the play (130 ff.). In an unusual technique of suspension, Aristophanes keeps his audience waiting for the duration of the parabasis (785–845) to discover the outcome of the Kinsman's attempt to make contact with Euripides.

### (III) 849–922. *Parody of parts of Euripides' Helen*

After a nice metapoetic joke at 848 (Euripides has not shown up because 'He must be ashamed of that boring work, *Palamedes*'—as though the whole situation revolved around the poetic qualities of the playwright's works rather than the need for a practical solution to the Kinsman's predicament) Aristophanes now intensifies his paratragic technique by making more extended and verbally specific use of the source play.<sup>14</sup> It is no coincidence that this more detailed, intricate form of paratragedy exploits, as also with the *Andromeda* (below), a play produced just a year earlier (Dionysia 412), thus maximizing the chances of recollection on the part of a fair number of spectators. Even so, the alternative myth of Helen's stay in Egypt during the Trojan War, and her subsequent reunion there with Menelaos, must

<sup>13</sup> Oiax's action was nonetheless dramatically salient: among other things, it used one of the very arts, writing, of which his now dead brother Palamedes was the inventor; cf. Euripides fr. 578 for Palamedes' own boasts about this in the same play (with specific mention, lines 4–5, of writing carrying information across the sea).

<sup>14</sup> See n. on 855–7 for the relevant cross-references.

have been well-enough known to most people for some pleasure to be derived from the travesty of it in the present scene.<sup>15</sup> It helps that the parody starts (as neither the *Telephos* nor the *Palamedes* passages did) at the very beginning of the source play (855–6 ~ *Helen* 1–2), thereby evoking the setting in a pointedly framed way.

As elsewhere too, in fact, Aristophanes employs paratragedy in a sort of stratified manner which allows different kinds of spectators to relish the comedy of the scene at various levels of sophistication. The best-informed can savour closely the individual verbal borrowings, as well as the mixing-in of tragic language (e.g. 872–3) that does not belong to the *Helen* itself or even comes from other sources (870 is partly based on a line of Sophokles). Such spectators would also have some sense of the neat way that Aristophanes telescopes together three main moments in the original (Helen's prologue and conversation with Teucer, Menelaos's companion; the arrival of Menelaos himself; and the recognition-scene between husband and wife) and would be alert to other subtleties, such as the irony of the Kinsman's echo at 850–1 ('I'll act out that recent play, the *Helen*. | At least I'm already wearing a female costume) of precisely the notion of mimetic role-playing that Agathon had originally espoused, to the Kinsman's derision, at 154–6. But anyone with only minimal knowledge of Euripides' play, provided they possessed a general familiarity with tragedy's style and ethos, could appreciate the grotesque clashes of register and perspective (exotic, mythological Egypt versus everyday Athens) between the worlds of the play-acting Kinsman and Euripides on the one hand, and the baffled but pugnacious Kritylla on the other—not to mention, as in the previous cases, some colourfully visual humour, such as the no doubt exaggeratedly seaweed-swathed appearance of Menelaos-Euripides (cf. 910).

#### (IV) 1009–1135. *Parody of parts of Euripides' Andromeda*

As Euripides beats a hasty retreat at 924, he promises his Kinsman something further from his 'ample stock of schemes', where the term *mechanê*, 'scheme', can simultaneously denote both general craftiness and dramatic plot-devices, but may additionally hint at use of the

<sup>15</sup> On the origins of the myth, which pre-dated Euripides' play of 412, see T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* (Baltimore, 1993), 574–6; cf. esp. Herodotos 2.112–20.

theatrical 'machine' or crane.<sup>16</sup> Once again, there is a delay (during which the chorus performs while the Kinsman is taken off-stage to be shackled to a plank) before we see Euripides' next attempt to perform one of his plays as a means of rescuing his Kinsman.

The last major phase of the play's paratragic sequence begins at 1009, when the Kinsman, now tied up, gets a signal from Euripides that he must enact the role of the enchained Andromeda as counterpart to Euripides' own impersonation of the hero Perseus. Euripides' *Andromeda* had been staged at the same festival as the *Helen* in 412; several points already made about the latter in relation to Aristophanes' audience apply equally, therefore, to the former. The story of Andromeda's enchainment to rocks on the coast of 'Ethiopia' by her father Kepheus as appeasement to a sea-monster (sent by Poseidon to punish an offence by Kepheus's wife), and her rescue by Perseus on his return from a mission to kill the Gorgon Medusa, was very well known. Aristophanes relies on many spectators' ability to appreciate not just the basic scenario but his specific burlesquing of Euripides' treatment of the myth, which started with Andromeda singing a lament in her chains and hearing some of her words echoing back to her from a cave in the rocks.<sup>17</sup> However, instead of following the order of events in the original (as he did, if selectively, with the *Helen*), Aristophanes mischievously reconfigures them. He starts the parody (1015 ff.) with material taken from Andromeda's response to the appearance of the sympathetic female chorus (an ironic contrast to the hostile chorus of the comedy itself) at the end of the tragedy's opening scene. Next, he moves back to the beginning of that scene and to Andromeda's lament itself (1065 ff.), though not before introducing Echo as a personified character (1056–64). Finally, he jumps forwards to the arrival of Perseus–Euripides (1098 ff.)—'flying' on the theatrical crane in the original but here probably walking on the ground—and his erotic attraction to Andromeda, whom the hero goes on to rescue in the tragedy itself, though not in its present botched adaptation.

Much of this parodic version, from midway through the Echo scene (1082 ff.), is in comic counterpoint to the presence of the

<sup>16</sup> The same noun was used at both 87 and 765 by the Kinsman and will be used again by Euripides at 1132: so 'scheming' becomes a leitmotif of Euripides' clever character/plays.

<sup>17</sup> For specific references to the fragments of Euripides' play, see my note on 1015.

irredeemably vulgar, dim-witted, but aggressive Archer. The Archer is the only character in the surviving plays of Aristophanes to speak 'bad' Greek over an extended stretch; his involvement widens to a maximum the incongruity between the stylized elevation of tragic poetry, as adopted by Euripides and the Kinsman, and the sordid circumstances of the latter's predicament. One aspect of this dramatic polarization is that the Kinsman, who as Andromeda now has to perform more *sung* poetry (and therefore behave like a highly virtuososo tragic actor), to some extent yields the role of prime comic buffoon, which he had occupied from the start of the play, to the Archer: hence, for example, the fact that the Archer's obscenities at 1114–20 are reminiscent of some of the Kinsman's own earlier jeers at the effeminate Agathon. Only, though, 'to some extent': the Kinsman's physical abasement and humiliation (pinned to the plank in the remains of his female costume, 943) leave him central to the ridiculous nature of the situation—all the more so given the way in which he cannot sustain his paratragic identity as Andromeda without lapsing into betrayals of his underlying masculinity (esp. 1020, 1042–5). That last detail would in performance give a further edge to the comedy of paratragedy: the actor playing the Kinsman would convey the confusions of genre, register, and reference by variations in pitch and timbre of voice, as well as by his general (though constrained) body language.

One final observation is worth making on the Echo section of the *Andromeda* parody. It is not hard to see the attractions to Aristophanes of this personified character: the comic potential of 'echo effects' is self-evident. We would dearly like to know how Euripides had given Echo and her voice tragic dignity in his own play, but however he handled the motif its aim must have been to add pathos to Andromeda's isolation. In terms of the present scene, by contrast, what is notable is that the contributions of Echo seem simply redundant. Within the context of the *escape* plot, it makes no sense for Euripides to 're-enact' this part of his play (with the conspicuously metatheatrical reference at 1060–1), especially since his echo effects not only wake up the sleeping Archer but take on a momentum of their own, like a mechanism stuck in gear. By highlighting Echo's role, Aristophanes underlines what I have suggested is the *raison d'être* of paratragedy: not to critique or devalue tragedy as such, but to *convert* it into the stuff of comedy. Euripides is trying

to follow his own script, yet finds his words being translated into a very different form of drama.

Four substantial blocks of Euripidean paratragedy, then, have served Aristophanes well but have 'failed' Euripides: after even his appearance as Perseus gets him nowhere (1098–1125), the tragedian still needs a way to rescue his kinsman. Yet, in a sense, Euripides' problem is Aristophanes' as well: namely, how to find an ending. Whether Aristophanes manages this entirely successfully is something about which critical disagreement is possible (though the quality of performance would obviously be a crucial factor in the theatre). But what is clear is that the denouement involves an abrupt and double shift of direction. The first shift is arguably a disappointing short-cut. Euripides simply proposes a permanent truce with the women, backed up by one more instance of the play's characteristically double-layered humour: the tragedian will stop 'slandering' the women—but if they remain hostile, he will continue to tell *the truth* about their nefarious secret lives (1160–9). That is not enough, however, to solve Euripides' (or Aristophanes') problem, since the Kinsman remains fastened to the plank and the Skythian Archer, acting on the orders of the Council, remains a stumbling-block.

Euripides' final solution takes him out of tragic mode altogether (though still within the realm of 'schemes', 1132: cf. n. 16) and sees him fall back on the basic comic resource of the phallus. He thereby enables Aristophanes' play to move to a different part of the spectrum of comic styles from the large preceding section of paratragedy. Aware of the Archer's sexual vulnerability, Euripides lures him easily into a trap by assuming the role of a woman in charge of a dancing-girl (Elaphion: literally 'little deer') and a boy piper: the group supplies musical entertainment for private parties (1178) and the woman knows how to play the procuress and extend the musical into the sexual (for a price: 1195). The ensuing distraction of the Archer by the physical lure of the dancing-girl entails familiar comic routines. When Euripides arranges for the girl to strip naked and sit on the Archer's lap (1181 ff.), the situation has something in common with old Philokleon's sexual shenanigans with the pipe-girl he has 'stolen' from a drunken symposium at *Wasps* 1341 ff. There is also a degree of resemblance to the calculated exploitation by Lysistrata of the naked figure of Reconciliation at *Lysistrata* 1115 ff.

But there is a little bit more to the dynamics of the present scene. Euripides' character in this passage, as well as his manipulation of his two young companions, would have reminded Aristophanes' audience of what might be called an alternative form of comedy. The woman Euripides impersonates is a female equivalent to the (more respectable) male Syracusan impresario who supplies the entertainment for the drinking-party in Xenophon's *Symposium*—entertainment which includes music, song, dance, juggling, and a short choreographed sketch (with kissing and brief dialogue) about the love of Dionysos and Ariadne.<sup>18</sup> Such small performing troupes clearly existed in the contemporary social world, and they no doubt varied in their degree of cultural sophistication. Euripides deliberately pitches his own group at the vulgar end of the scale in order to work the necessary effect on the Archer. The little scene he scripts and directs is the sort of self-contained, low-life drama which Greeks called 'mime' (including words, contrary to modern usage of this term), and of which the Dionysos–Ariadne sketch in Xenophon's *Symposium* is a more decorous variant.<sup>19</sup> Aristophanes' ultimate trick of metatheatre in *Women at the Thesmophoria*, therefore, is to incorporate a mime-like revue within the poetically elaborate and ambitious framework of his own genre—but to do so, in a delicious paradox, through the figure of none other than a tragic playwright.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Xenophon, *Symposium* esp. 2.1, 2.7–8, 2.11, 9.2–6. Note that at 9.4 Dionysos sits on the knees of Ariadne: the reverse of *Women at the Thesmophoria* 1182–4!

<sup>19</sup> For a useful outline (but with untranslated Greek) of the various kinds of things covered by the term 'mime' in Greek antiquity, see I. C. Cunningham, *Herodas Mimiambi* (Oxford, 1971), 3–11. Mime is usually called 'subliterary' because it was not part of the standard system of ancient genres; but Aristotle, *Poetics* 1.1447b10–11 does mention mime in passing when mapping out his own classification of mimetic art-forms.

<sup>20</sup> For another case where Aristophanes probably echoes typical mime scenarios, see my introduction to *Assembly-Women* (in *Aristophanes: Birds and Other Plays* in this series).



# *WOMEN AT THE THESMOPHORIA*

## Speaking Characters

KINSMAN: of EURIPIDES

EURIPIDES: tragic playwright

SERVANT: of AGATHON

AGATHON: tragic playwright

LEADER: of the CHORUS

CHORUS (24 dancers/singers): of women attending the  
Thesmophoria

MIKA: an Athenian woman, wife of Kleonymos

KRITYLLA: another (older) Athenian woman

KLEISTHENES: an effeminate Athenian citizen

PRYTANIS: one of the standing committee of the city Council

ARCHER: a Skythian slave, official armed attendant of the PRYTANIS

## Silent Characters

NURSE: wet-nurse of MIKA's child

WIVES: various women present at the Thesmophoria

ELAPHION: a dancing-girl

TEREDON: a young male piper

[*The stage building has a single door which will serve in the opening scene as the house of AGATHON, later as a store-room related to the women's festival, later still as an indeterminate building on the Akropolis. In the centre of the orchêstra stands an altar, and over to one side, somewhere near the door, a statue of Apollo. From one of the two side entrances (eisodoi), which connect with other parts of the city, enter EURIPIDES, neatly dressed and with grey hair and beard, and, trudging along some way behind him, his KINSMAN, also elderly but more scruffily dressed.*]

KINSMAN. O Zeus, when on earth will a swallow appear in the sky?\*

I'm about to drop dead. This fellow's been frantic since dawn.

Do you mind if I ask, before my spleen bursts open,

Where it is you're dragging me to, Euripides?

EURIPIDES [*earnestly*]. You're not permitted to hear what you'll soon find out

With your very own eyes.

KINSMAN. What d'you mean? Please tell me more.

I'm not permitted to hear?

EURIPIDES. Not the things that you'll see.

KINSMAN. And mustn't I see them then?

EURIPIDES. Not the things you should hear.

KINSMAN. I'm certainly missing your point—though it sounds very clever.

Do you mean I should neither hear nor see at all? 10

EURIPIDES. Why would you? The nature of each is quite distinct.

KINSMAN. Not hearing or seeing, you mean?

EURIPIDES. Precisely my point.

KINSMAN. But why distinct?

EURIPIDES [*abstractly*]. That's how they once split apart.

When Aither in the beginning took separate form

And started to breed living creatures inside itself,

It first contrived as our instrument of vision

The eye that mimics the wheel of the sun itself,

And it drilled the ears to serve as a funnel of hearing.\*

KINSMAN. Through a funnel, you mean, I should neither hear nor see?

[*Ironic*] By Zeus, I *love* to learn new things like this: 20

How special it is to keep company with the wise!

EURIPIDES. There are many such things you could learn from me.

KINSMAN. But  
how

In addition to all this wonderful stuff could I find

A way to lose the use of both my legs?

EURIPIDES. Come on, catch up, and pay close attention.

KINSMAN. All right.

EURIPIDES. Do you see this house door here?

KINSMAN [*marily*]. Well by Herakles

I *think* so.

EURIPIDES. Now silence.

KINSMAN [*obtusely*]. I'm silent about the door!

EURIPIDES. Now listen.

KINSMAN. Okay—I'm silent about the door!

EURIPIDES. It's here the well-known Agathon happens to live,

The tragic poet. 30

KINSMAN. Which Agathon's that one then?

EURIPIDES. He's the Agathon who—

KINSMAN. Not the swarthy, muscular  
one?

EURIPIDES. No, a different one.

KINSMAN. Well I've never set eyes on him.

Not the one with the big bushy beard?

EURIPIDES. Have you really not seen  
him?

KINSMAN. No I haven't, at least as far as my memory serves me.

EURIPIDES. Well I'm sure you've *fucked* him—but maybe you still  
don't know him!

[*The stage door now starts to open.*]

But let's step back out of sight this way: here comes

One of Agathon's servants. He's carrying fire and myrtles,

To sacrifice, I think, for poetry's sake.

[*Enter the SERVANT carrying a brazier and myrtle wreath; he places both on/by the altar, adopts the posture of a priest, and begins to chant, observed by EURIPIDES and his KINSMAN standing back to one side.*]

SERVANT. Let sacred silence hold all the people!

Let all mouths be locked, since present inside 40

These halls of ours is a band of Muses  
Engaged, our mistresses, in making song!  
Let windless Aither check the breezes,  
Let the waves of the sea now cease to crash,  
The grey-green sea—

KINSMAN. What bullshit!

EURIPIDES. Keep quiet!

SERVANT. Let feathered creatures fall into slumbers,  
Let the feet of wild beasts that run through forests  
Be immobilized.

KINSMAN. More bullshitty bullshit!

SERVANT. This man of beautiful words, Agathon,  
Our leader, prepares— 50

KINSMAN. Surely not to be fucked?

SERVANT. Who uttered those words?

KINSMAN. It was windless Aither.

SERVANT. He lays his groundwork, his play's foundations,  
He bends fresh timbers as wheel-rims of words,  
While others he smooths and fastens together.  
Ideas he mints, creating new terms.  
He pours his wax and rounds the model,\*  
Then injects the bronze—

KINSMAN. And gives a blow-job!

SERVANT. What rustic comes nigh to this enclosure?

KINSMAN. Someone who's ready, with you and your poet  
Of beautiful words, to breach your enclosure 60  
And rounding you and turning you over  
[*Holding phallus*] To inject this prick of mine!

[*The SERVANT stops chanting and confronts the KINSMAN directly.*]

SERVANT. I suppose when young you must have been violent,  
old man.

EURIPIDES. Please pay no attention to *him*, my friend, but go  
And ask Agathon without delay to come out.

SERVANT. No need to beseech: he'll appear himself in a  
moment.

He's just beginning to compose his lyrics. In winter  
It's hard to bend the timbers to make his verses\*  
Unless he comes out of doors and stands in the sun.

KINSMAN. What am *I* supposed to do?

70

SERVANT. Just wait, he's coming.

[*The SERVANT goes back inside the stage building. EURIPIDES starts to pace around nervously, followed by his increasingly exasperated*

KINSMAN.]

EURIPIDES. O Zeus, what plans do you have for me today?

KINSMAN. Well by the gods I'd certainly like to know

What's going on here. Why these groans and all this angst?

You're a kinsman of mine—you shouldn't be keeping secrets.

EURIPIDES. There's a really big problem about to come to the boil.

KINSMAN. What sort of problem?

EURIPIDES. A decision's about to be made

On whether my life continues or comes to an end!

KINSMAN. But how can that be? The courts aren't sitting today

To hear any trials, and there won't be a session of Council:

The Thesmophoria's still underway today.\*

80

EURIPIDES. That's precisely why I'm afraid there's a threat to  
my life!

All the women have formed a conspiracy aimed at *me*:

In the Thesmophorion shrine they've agreed to hold\*

An assembly today with a view to my ruin.

KINSMAN. But *why*?

EURIPIDES. On the grounds that my tragedies give them a bad  
reputation.\*

KINSMAN. Oh I see—well by Poseidon they're *right* about that!

But what's your scheme to find an escape from this?

EURIPIDES. I want to persuade Agathon, my fellow-playwright,  
To enter the Thesmophorion.

KINSMAN. And do *what*?

EURIPIDES. To attend the women's assembly and if need be  
Defend me.

90

KINSMAN. But in his own person or in disguise?

EURIPIDES. He'd be in disguise, dressed up in the clothes of  
a woman.

KINSMAN. An ingenious ploy—entirely your style of things.

Our family takes the biscuit for crafty scheming!\*

[*At this point the door of the stage building starts to open; during the following lines AGATHON comes into view on a wheeled platform, the*

ekkuklêma: *he is a beardless young man, reclining on a couch, wearing female attire and surrounded by an array of women's garments and accessories. As he emerges, he starts to hum and to tune a lyre he is holding.*

EURIPIDES [turning]. Shh, shh!

KINSMAN. What's wrong?

EURIPIDES. Look, Agathon's  
coming out now.

KINSMAN. But where?

EURIPIDES. Can't you see? He's the man being wheeled  
out here.

KINSMAN. Have I lost my sight altogether? I simply can't see  
Any *man* over here—that's surely Kyrene there.\*

EURIPIDES. Keep quiet. He's on the point of starting a song.

KINSMAN. Are those anthill tunnels or *what* that he's crooning  
about?\*

100

[AGATHON *now starts to sing out loud, taking alternately—with suitable inflections of performance style—the lyric voices of a chorus-leader [solo] and a chorus of Trojan maidens [group]. The song is poetically compressed and rhythmically mannered.*]

AGATHON. [Solo] The chthonic goddesses' holy\*  
Torch receive, you maidens, with our free\*  
Fatherland, and dance with voices loud.

[Group] For which deity the revel?

Tell his name! My spirit is ready  
To hold the gods in reverence.

[Solo] Come now celebrate in music  
The one who draws the golden bow,  
Phoibos, who founded the spaces of  
Our land on the banks of the Simoeis.\*

110

[Group] Hail, in our loveliest songs,  
Phoibos, and in our melodious worship  
Display your sacred privilege!

[Solo] The goddess on oak-breeding mountains,  
Artemis, maiden of the wild—of her too sing!

[Group] I follow you, acclaiming  
And extolling Leto's solemn offspring,  
Artemis who shares her bed with no one!

[*Solo*] Sing of Leto too, with twangs of Asian lyre, 120  
 Keeping clashing rhythms in time with your dance  
 To the beat of the Phrygian Graces.\*

[*Group*] I revere mistress Leto  
 And the lyre, mother of hymns  
 That resound with manly voice.

[*Solo*] The lyre makes a beam flash in divine  
 Eyes, as does our sudden song-cry. Wherefore  
 Glorify lord Phoibos!

[*Group*] Hail, blissful child of Leto!

[AGATHON *remains reclining on his couch while EURIPIDES and his KINSMAN, the latter twitching with ironic excitement, step forward to speak with him.*]

KINSMAN. What a gorgeous song, o gods of the female domain!\* 130

It reeked of feminine odours, lascivious kisses,  
 And tongued endearments! Just listening made me feel  
 A tickling sensation creep right down under my bottom.  
 As for you, my girly young man: using Aischylos' words  
 From his *Lykourgeia*, I'd like to ask you some questions.\*

[*Mock-poetically*] Whence comes this sissy? What country is  
 yours? What dress?

What confusion of life is this? What can fancy lyre  
 Say to saffron dress, or ordinary lyre to hairnet?  
 Why athlete's oil-flask and woman's breast-band together?\*

What have mirror and sword to do with one another? 140

And you, my child, are you being brought up as a man?  
 Then where's your prick? Your cloak? Your Lakonian shoes?\*

But perhaps you're really a woman? Then where are your tits?  
 What's your answer? Why this silence? Do I have to seek you  
 From the song that you sang, since you won't explain yourself?

AGATHON [*loftily*]. Old sir, old sir, your envious complaints  
 I hear, but inside I feel no tribulation.

[*More prosaically*] I'm wearing the clothes that match my  
 state of mind.

The task of a poet requires assimilation

Between his traits and the plays he has to write. 150

If, for instance, he's writing plays with female roles,

His body must also share in the traits involved.

KINSMAN. You have kinky sex when writing a part for Phaidra?\*

AGATHON [*ignoring him*]. When writing for masculine roles, the body already

Has its natural features. But as for the things we lack,

We must use role-playing to help us pursue what we need.\*

KINSMAN [*holding his phallus*]. Remember to call for *me* when you write satyr-plays:

I'll stand behind you and help—with a large erection!\*

AGATHON. Besides, it's such an uncultured sight to see

A poet who looks like a peasant and is shaggy all over.

160

Take famous Ibykos and Anakreon of Teos,

Alkaïos too: their lyrics have piquant flavours

And they wore head-scarves and displayed Ionian softness.\*

Or take Phrynichos—[*patronizingly*] you've surely heard of *him*.\*

He had beautiful looks, his clothes were beautiful too;

That's why his plays were beautiful works as well.

A poet is bound to write what's like his nature.\*

KINSMAN. That's why ugly Philokles writes such ugly stuff,

And rotten Xenokles writes such rotten things too,

And Theognis as well: he's boring and so are his plays!\*

170

AGATHON. There's no escaping the link. I've recognized this

And have pampered myself accordingly.

KINSMAN.

But why?

EURIPIDES [*to KINSMAN*]. Stop yapping away. I used to be just the same

When *I* was the age he is and was starting to write.

KINSMAN. By Zeus I'm glad I wasn't brought up like *you*!

EURIPIDES. But let me explain the reason I've come.

KINSMAN.

Yes, tell him.

EURIPIDES. Agathon, 'it's the mark of a skilful man to know how

To compress a long speech with a fine concision of words'.\*

I've been struck down by a blow of fresh misfortune

And have come to you in supplication.

180

AGATHON.

What for?

EURIPIDES. The women have plans to destroy my life today

At the Thesmophoria, because I slander them.

AGATHON. What kind of help do you think that *I* can give?

EURIPIDES. Every kind that I need! If you infiltrate the meeting

That the women are holding and look like a woman yourself,



You can speak in defence of me and save my life!

Only you can speak in a style that's worthy of *me*.

AGATHON. Why can't you go and present your own defence?

EURIPIDES. I'll tell you. For one thing, my face is known to all.

For another, my hair is grey and I'm bearded as well.

190

But *your* face is pretty, as pale as a woman's and shaved,

You've a woman's voice, you're soft-skinned, and lovely to look at.

AGATHON [*hesitating*]. Euripides—

EURIPIDES.

What's the matter?

AGATHON.

Did you

write the line:

'You're happy alive, don't you think that your father is too?''\*

EURIPIDES. I certainly did.

AGATHON.

Then don't expect that I

Will face your problems for you. I'd be insane!

You must shoulder the burden yourself, it's no one else's.

'When disaster strikes it's no time for ingenious schemes.

Submission alone is the way to bear the pain.'\*

KINSMAN [*to AGATHON*]. Well *you're* an asshole that's gaping for all to see

200

Not because of your words but because of submission all right!

EURIPIDES. What makes you afraid to go and do this for me?

AGATHON. My fate would be worse than yours.

EURIPIDES.

How's that?

AGATHON.

Must

you ask?

They think I want to usurp their nocturnal work

And to steal for myself the sex that belongs to women.

KINSMAN. 'Usurp', you say? By Zeus, you want to be fucked!

Still, I take your point, by Zeus—it makes good sense.

EURIPIDES. Well will you or won't you do it?

AGATHON.

No chance at all.

EURIPIDES. Thrice godforsaken plight!

KINSMAN [*apparently moved*].

Euripides,

You're my dearest relative, please don't let yourself down.

210

EURIPIDES. Well what do you think I should do?

KINSMAN [*pointing to AGATHON*].

For a start tell *him*

To go to hell. And make use of *me* instead.

EURIPIDES. Come on then, since you're making this offer of help,  
Remove this cloak you're wearing.

KINSMAN [*obeying*]. I've thrown it aside.

But what are you going to do?

EURIPIDES. Shave off your beard

And singe all this hair down here.

KINSMAN [*nervously*]. Feel free, if you want.

But I shouldn't have offered my services after all!

EURIPIDES. Agathon, I know you always carry a razor,

Be so kind as to lend us one.

AGATHON. Please help yourself

From this razor-box down here.

220

EURIPIDES. That's decent of you.

[EURIPIDES *opens the razor-box lying with many other accessories by AGATHON's couch and finds a suitable implement in it. He then turns back to his KINSMAN, whom he moves to the end of the couch and sets about shaving.*]

Sit down and start by puffing your right cheek out.

KINSMAN. Ouch, ouch!

EURIPIDES. Shut up! I'll force a peg in your mouth\*

If you don't keep quiet.

KINSMAN [*jumping up*]. Aargh, aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaargh!

EURIPIDES. Hey, where are you running?

KINSMAN. The Awesome Goddesses'  
shrine!\*

In Demeter's name I'm not hanging round here any longer

To be cut to shreds.

EURIPIDES. But you'll be a ludicrous sight

With just one half of your face being shaved like that.

KINSMAN. I couldn't care less.

EURIPIDES [*wheedling*]. But I beg you, by all the gods,

Don't betray me. Come back.

KINSMAN [*reluctantly returning*]. Why on earth did I ever  
agree?

EURIPIDES. Keep still and hold your head up. Stop wriggling  
around!

230

KINSMAN. Oh, oh.

EURIPIDES. Stop moaning. The job's been nicely finished.

KINSMAN [*feeling his cheeks*]. What a wretch I am. You've stripped me of manliness.\*

EURIPIDES. Don't worry about it, you'll now look extremely pretty. Do you want to see yourself?

KINSMAN. If you like—pass me that.

[EURIPIDES *hands him a mirror from AGATHON's belongings.*]

EURIPIDES. Do you see yourself?

KINSMAN. No I don't! I see Kleisthenes!\*

EURIPIDES. Stand up to allow me to singe you. And now bend over.

KINSMAN. I find this revolting. You'll turn me into a piglet.\*

EURIPIDES [*calling*]. Can someone bring me a torch or a lamp from inside?

[*The SERVANT re-enters from the stage building, bringing a large torch. As EURIPIDES puts the KINSMAN in the appropriate position, he notices the latter's phallus hanging between his legs.*]

Bend over, and watch out there for your piglet's tail!

KINSMAN. You can bet that I will—though I think that I'm now on fire! 240

[*Parodically*] Help, help, I'm in trouble! Bring water at once, my neighbours,

Before the flames spread next to a nearby arsehole!

EURIPIDES. Keep calm.

KINSMAN. But how keep calm when I'm burnt to cinders?

EURIPIDES. There's only the tiniest bit still left. You're through The worst by far.

KINSMAN [*standing up*]. But just look at the soot you've produced! The whole area under my bottom's completely black.

EURIPIDES. Don't worry, it's someone else's job to sponge it.

KINSMAN. If anyone tries to wash my anus, he'll cop it!

[EURIPIDES *now gives the torch back to the SERVANT, who exits with it back into the stage building.*]

EURIPIDES. Agathon, as you weren't prepared to help in person, At least please lend us a suitable cloak for him 250  
And a breast-band too. You can't deny that you've got them.

AGATHON. You're welcome to take what you want.

KINSMAN.

Well what

should I take?

[EURIPIDES examines AGATHON's possessions and then proceeds to help dress his KINSMAN in the garments selected, both characters taking some care over the whole process.]

EURIPIDES. Take this saffron dress and drape it over yourself.

KINSMAN. By Aphrodite, what a lovely smell of willy!\*

Now tighten the belt for me.

EURIPIDES.

Next the breast-band.

KINSMAN.

There.

But please adjust the hang of the dress round my legs.

EURIPIDES [*to AGATHON*]. He needs a hairnet and headscarf too.

AGATHON.

No,

look,

Take this *mig* instead; I sometimes wear it at night.

EURIPIDES. By Zeus, a perfect suggestion. Exactly what's wanted.

KINSMAN. Will it fit my head?

260

EURIPIDES [*arranging it*]. Of course. It couldn't be better.

[*To AGATHON*] Please give us a cloak.

AGATHON.

Take this one here from the

couch.

EURIPIDES. And shoes as well.

AGATHON.

You can take this pair of mine here.

KINSMAN. Will they fit me too? I know you like things *loose*!

AGATHON. That's for you to decide. But now that you've got what you need

I'd like to be wheeled back inside without further delay.

[*The ekkuklêma platform (see 96) is now wheeled back into the stage building. EURIPIDES takes a step back to inspect the appearance of the*

KINSMAN.]

EURIPIDES. Well, well, this fellow's appearance has been transformed

To a woman's. But if you *speak*, adjust your voice

And be sure to sound like a woman.

KINSMAN [*in falsetto?*].

I'll try my best.

EURIPIDES. Let's see your style of walk.

KINSMAN.

By Apollo, not yet!

I want you to swear—

270

EURIPIDES.

Swear what?

KINSMAN.

That you'll use every means

To *rescue* me, if the plan goes badly wrong.

EURIPIDES. I swear by Aither, the dwelling-place of Zeus.\*

KINSMAN. As good as an oath by Hippokrates' tenement house!\*

EURIPIDES. I swear by *all* the gods without exception.

KINSMAN. Remember, then, that your mind has sworn the oath

But your tongue is not what's sworn—and *I* didn't make you!\*

EURIPIDES. Well it's time for you to hurry. The assembly's starting:

I can see the signal inside the Thesmophorion.\*

I'd better be off myself.

[EURIPIDES *hurries off by one of the side entrances (eisodoi)*. His KINSMAN *slips into the role of a woman attending the Thesmophoria: using his falsetto voice, he addresses an imaginary slave.*]

KINSMAN.

Come this way, Thratta.\*

O Thratta, look at those torches burning away

280

And the crowds coming up the hill beneath the smoke.\*

You glorious gods, Thesmophoroi, welcome me,\*

May my journey here and home bring me good fortune.

O Thratta, put down the basket and get out the cakes

For me to sacrifice to the two goddesses.

[*He goes through a charade of taking cakes and putting them on the altar before starting to pray.*]

O mistress dear, Demeter, most venerable goddess,

And Pherrephatta, grant me huge wealth from which\*

To sacrifice—[*sheepishly*] if not, let no one notice!

And may my daughter, Piglet, find a husband\*

Who's stinking rich—but otherwise stupid and dim.

290

And may my son, little Willy, be clever and bright.\*

[*The KINSMAN bustles around like a woman settling herself at the festival.*]

Now where, oh where should I sit to hear the speakers

Without any trouble? You'll have to go now, Thratta:

Slaves aren't allowed to hear the women's speeches.

[During the latter part of the KINSMAN's speech a crowd of women has gradually entered, imagined as making their way up the Akropolis to the festival. Twenty-four of them now take up formation as the CHORUS, ready to sing and dance in what follows.]

[PARODOS: 295-371]

LEADER [*in prose*]. Let sacred silence prevail! Let sacred silence prevail!

Pray to the two Thesmophoroi and to Ploutos and to  
Kalligeneia and to Kourotrophos and to Hermes and 300  
the Graces that we may hold this assembly and meeting  
in the finest and most excellent manner, bringing multiple  
benefits to the city of the Athenians and good fortune to us  
women ourselves. And may the woman who does and speaks  
the best for the community of the Athenians and of the women  
here as well win the debate! Pray for these things and 310  
for everything good for ourselves. Hail paion, hail paion, hail  
paion! Let us rejoice!\*

CHORUS. We accept your instructions and beseech  
The race of the gods to respond to these prayers  
By joyously showing themselves to us.  
Zeus of immense renown, and you of the golden lyre  
Who own Delos, sacred island,  
And you all-powerful maiden,  
Grey-eyed goddess of the golden spear who  
Inhabits this envied city, come here to us.\*  
And you too, many-titled slayer of beasts, 320  
Offspring of golden-visaged Leto.\*  
And you, awesome marine god Poseidon,  
Ruler of the seas,  
Leave the fish-abounding recesses  
Where the waters swirl furiously,  
With you, maiden daughters of the sea-god  
Nereus,  
And you mountain-roaming Nymphs.  
May the golden phorminx of Apollo\*  
Resound in response to these prayers  
Of ours. May perfection belong

To this assembly convened by Athens'  
 Women of good birth.

330

[*The LEADER continues in the elevated tones of a formal proclamation somewhat reminiscent of the start of a meeting of the city's political Assembly.*]

LEADER. Pray now, I enjoin you, to all the Olympian gods  
 And Olympian goddesses too, and the Pythian gods  
 And Pythian goddesses too, and the Delian gods  
 And Delian goddesses too, and the rest of the gods,\*  
 That if anyone plots against the community  
 Of the city's women, or makes clandestine approach  
 To Euripides and the Medes to cause some harm  
 To the women's interests, or schemes to become a tyrant\*  
 Or restore a tyrant from exile, or betrays a woman  
 Who uses a surrogate baby, or if a slave-girl  
 Acts as a go-between but then tells the master\* 340  
 Or falsifies a message she's sent to deliver,  
 Or if an adulterer cheats and lies to a woman  
 Or doesn't give all the presents he promised he would,  
 Or if a crone wins an adulterer with gifts  
 Or a courtesan is bribed to take two lovers,  
 Or if an innkeeper, whether man or woman, corrupts  
 The standard measures they use for serving drinks—  
 Call down on such people, and on their houses as well,  
 Total ruin! But pray that the rest of us women receive 350  
 Every possible blessing the gods know how to bestow.

CHORUS. We join in praying for fulfilment  
 In the interests of city and people  
 For all these wishes of yours,  
 And that all those women who offer the best advice  
 May prevail in their speeches. But as for those others  
 Who deceive us and contravene  
 The oaths tradition prescribes,  
 For private profit and to cause us harm, 360  
 Or whose aim is that all decrees and laws  
 Be overturned and replaced,  
 Or who disclose our secrets

To those who are our enemies,  
 Or who enlist the Medes\*  
 In harming our country –  
 All *those* are impious people and wrong the city.  
 O all-powerful  
 Zeus, ratify these things to ensure  
 That the gods stand beside us, 370  
 Mere women though we are.

LEADER. Pay attention, one and all. A decision was taken  
 By the women's Council: Archikleia presided,  
 Lusilla was scribe, the proposer was Sostrate.  
 We must hold assembly at dawn on the middle day  
 Of the festival, the day we're most at leisure.  
 The first item of business concerns Euripides:  
 His punishment needs deciding; his crimes are clear  
 To all of us. Who wishes to speak to the motion?\*

MIKA [*stepping forward*]. I do! 380

LEADER. Then put on this garland before  
 you speak.

Silence all round, pay attention. She's clearing her throat  
 Just like real orators. Clearly she'll speak at length.

MIKA. I swear by the two goddesses it's no pretension\*  
 That makes me stand up to speak, you women. It's this:  
 I've felt oppressed and angry for ages now  
 At seeing the vilification we women endure  
 At Euripides' hands, the son of a vegetable-seller,\*  
 And at all the different slanders he makes against us.  
 Well, hasn't he smeared us in every conceivable way?  
 He's maligned us without exception wherever you find 390  
 Spectators with tragic actors and choruses too.\*  
 He calls us adultery-addicts and man-seducers,  
 Wine-swillers, betrayers, with tongues that never stop wagging,\*  
 An utterly worthless lot and a bane to all men.  
 So when they return from watching his plays on the benches,\*  
 They give us suspicious glances and start a search  
 In case an adulterer's hidden somewhere in the house.  
 We can no longer do all the things that we *used* to do.  
 He's made it impossible—such are the terrible views



That he's taught our husbands to hold. So if, for instance, 400  
 A woman should weave a garland, they say she's in love.\*  
 If she's wandering round the house and drops a pot,  
 Her husband asks her: '*Who* is this breakage for?  
 There's only one person, "the Korinthian guest" himself.\*'  
 Or suppose a girl is sick, her brother will say:  
 'This pale complexion's strange; it makes me suspicious.'  
 Or another example: a woman who can't get pregnant  
 Wants to smuggle a surrogate child. But how can she hide it?  
 The men of the family sit round her bed at the birth.\*  
 In the past there were older men who'd marry young girls 410  
 But they've heard his slanders as well, so none of them's left  
 Who's prepared to marry a wife because of this line:  
 'If an old man marries, his wife will become his ruler.\*'  
 It's also Euripides' fault that in women's quarters\*  
 The men put seals and bars on all the doors  
 To maintain surveillance. What's more, they keep fierce dogs  
 To scare adulterers off from coming inside.  
 Well, some of these things are understandable.  
 But we used to have total control over household stocks  
 And could take some barley or oil or wine unnoticed. 420  
 No longer! The men now carry the keys themselves  
 Or hide them away. And they're always that awful kind  
 They call Lakonian keys, the sort with three teeth.\*  
 In the past we could secretly open the storeroom doors  
 By getting a cheap signet-ring for stamping the seal.  
 But now Euripides, lousy slave that he is,  
 Has taught them to use more intricate types of seal  
 With the signet-rings they wear. Well here's my proposal:  
 His downfall has got to be plotted, one way or another,  
 Whether using poison or some other method instead.\* 430  
 We've got to destroy him! So that's my public statement.  
 I'll draft the full decree with the woman who's scribe.\*

[MIKA *removes the garland and steps back to join the general group.*]

CHORUS.    Never before have I heard *Strophe\**  
               A woman of craftier wiles  
               Or a more impressive speaker.  
               Everything she says is right.

Everything was fully examined.  
 Everything was weighed with thought, and shrewdly  
 She conceived her detailed arguments  
 And worked them out with care.  
 If you could compare her speech  
 With one from Xenokles, Karkinos' son,\* 440  
 You'd all agree, I have no doubt,  
 He speaks the purest drivel!

[Another woman now comes forward and puts on the speaker's garland.]

KRITYLLA. I too would like to speak but I'll keep it brief.  
 The previous speaker's complaints were well expressed  
 But I want to tell you my own first-hand account.  
 My husband died some time ago on Kypros.\*  
 He left behind five children, all young. I struggled  
 To rear them by weaving myrtle garlands for sale.  
 For a while I survived in this way, though only just.  
 But now this fellow, by writing all his plays, 450  
 Has persuaded the men that the gods don't exist at all:\*  
 The result is that sales of garlands have fallen badly!  
 So I urge and propose before this gathering here  
 That this man should be punished for lots of different reasons.  
 The wrongs he does us, o women, are as rank and foul  
 As the vegetable plots in which his mother reared him.\*  
 But I'm off to the Agora now: some men have placed  
 An order for twenty garlands—I need to weave them.

[She removes the speaker's garland and rushes off by one of the eisodoi.]

CHORUS. A second example, this, of fiery spirit  
 And even more subtle than the one before. 460  
 What a flow of verbiage  
 And all so timely, from a woman of sense  
 And wily intelligence, every word convincing!\*  
 For his outrageous treatment of us this man  
 Must pay the penalty for all to see.

[After glancing around, the KINSMAN now seizes his chance and steps forward to take the speaker's garland. He speaks in the quasi-female falsetto that EURIPIDES had instructed him to use.]

KINSMAN. Let me start, o women, by saying this indignation\*  
 At all Euripides' terrible slandering words  
 Is hardly surprising, and nor is your boiling bile!  
 I myself—I pledge what I say on my children's future—  
 Simply *hate* that man: I'd be mad to feel anything else. 470  
 But nevertheless we need to review these matters.  
 We're all alone and our words won't get reported.  
 Why is it we keep on making complaints against him  
 And feeling upset, when it's only a tiny handful  
 Of all our *numerous* misdemeanours he's mentioned?  
 Just to limit the point to myself, never mind other women,  
 I can tell you I've done many things that I shouldn't have done.  
 Worst of all was when I'd been married for only three days  
 And my husband was sharing my bed. But I still had a lover,  
 The man who'd deflowered me when I was only—seven. 480  
 He came that night, in lust, and scratched on the door.\*  
 I knew the sound at once and crept off down.  
 'Well where are you going?' my husband asked. I said:  
 'My stomach's in painful spasms, my husband; I need  
 To go outside and use the latrine.' 'Go on then.'  
 He got up to grind some juniper, dill, and sage.\*  
 I took some water and moistened the house-door hinge  
 And went out to my lover. He gave me a good hard bonking  
 While I bent and gripped the laurel by Apollo's statue.\*  
 Euripides never told anyone *that*, you see. 490  
 Nor how we use our slaves and muleteers  
 To give us a shag when there's no one else to do it.  
 Nor how, when we spend all night being screwed by someone,  
 Next day at dawn we chew on lots of garlic  
 So that when our husbands come home from guarding the walls,\*  
 They'll never suspect us of mischief. These things, you see,  
 Euripides never revealed. If he slanders Phaidra,  
 What's that to us? Moreover, he's never described  
 How a wife holds up a cloak to show her husband  
 What it's like against the light, while hidden behind it 500  
 Is the lover she lets from the house. No he's never told *that*!\*  
 And I know a woman who claimed she was having contractions  
 For a whole ten days, till she'd managed to *purchase* a baby.  
 Her husband went shopping for things to help with the birth\*

While an old hag smuggled the baby inside in a pot,  
 A honeycomb stuffed in its mouth to prevent it from bawling.  
 Then when the old hag gave a nod, the woman cried out  
 To her husband, 'Get out, get out! I think I'm about  
 To give birth!' The child was kicking inside the pot.  
 So the husband ran out in joy while the wife pulled out 510  
 The stopper from the baby's mouth and the baby yelled.  
 Then the filthy old woman who brought the baby along  
 Runs out with a grin to the husband and gives him the news:  
 'Your son's a lion, a lion! He's your spitting image  
 In all respects, including his dear little willy:  
 It's exactly the same as your own—all bent like a catkin.'  
 Don't we do these terrible things? By Artemis, yes  
 We certainly do! Should we rage at Euripides then,  
 Though all he inflicts on us are the things that we've done?\*

[*The KINSMAN stays where he is while a reaction of shock spreads through the women and the CHORUS.*]

CHORUS.        This leaves me quite amazed:     *Antistrophe\**     520  
                   It came from out of the blue!  
                   What place gave nurture to  
                   So impudent a woman as this?  
                   For this scoundrel to say these things  
                   So publicly and shamelessly—  
                   I thought it inconceivable,  
                   Such outright recklessness.  
                   There's nothing impossible now.  
                   I endorse that familiar proverb:  
                   Be sure to look under every stone  
                   In case an orator bites you!\*     530

[*The following exchanges, to 573, are in a longer 'recitative' metre, accompanied by the piper.*]

LEADER.    Don't be surprised, we've always known there's only one  
                   thing worse

                  Than utterly shameless women, and that's—well, just more  
                   women, that's all!

MIKA.    I swear in the name of Aglauros, o women, you must  
                   be out of your minds.\*

You've either become the victims of drugs or suffered some other impairment

Allowing this woman, this damnable creature, to utter such vilification

Of all of us here. Well we've no other option, we'll have to take action ourselves.

With the help of our slaves what we need to find is a source of some very hot ashes,\*

Then we'll burn away all the pubic hair from her pussy. That way she'll learn

As a woman she shouldn't abuse other women—a lesson she'll never forget.

KINSMAN. No, no, not my pussy, I beg you, o women! Please don't get carried away. 540

When we citizen women are gathered together we're allowed to say what we think.

So if I just said what I think is the truth in defence of Euripides

Do I then deserve to be punished by you by having my pubic hair cropped?

MIKA. And you think you *don't* deserve to be punished? You're the only one here who's dared

To speak in defence of a man who has done us so many intolerable wrongs.

He's deliberately sought out plots for his plays in which a bad woman appeared.

*Melanippes* and *Phaidras*, it's works of that sort he composes.\*

But no play at all

Called *Penelope*, no play about *her*. Why not? Because of her virtue.

KINSMAN. But that's not the reason, I know what it is. There isn't a woman alive

Who could be compared to Penelope—every one of them's some sort of Phaidra! 550

MIKA. Do you hear what she said, you women, this loathsome creature who stands before us?

Yet again she's slandered us one and all.

KINSMAN. But by Zeus I've nowhere near finished!

I haven't yet told all the secrets I know. Would you like me to tell you some more?

MIKA. What more could there still be left to describe? You've surely revealed all you knew.

KINSMAN. But I haven't recounted the tiniest fraction of all of the things that we do!

For instance, I haven't explained, you see, how we take an athlete's scraper\*

And use it to siphon off wine for ourselves—

MIKA. Enough! Damnation upon you!

KINSMAN. Or how we filch Apatouria meat and use it to pay procuresses,

Then claim the weasel\*—

MIKA. Too shocking for words! You're talking sheer nonsense about us.

KINSMAN. Or how one woman smashed open her husband's skull with the blow of an axe. 560

Nor the way that another used drugs to poison her husband and make him insane,\*

Nor how yet another, an Acharnian woman, hid her own father's body . . .

MIKA. Confound you!

KINSMAN. . . . beneath the bathtub inside the house.\*

MIKA. How on earth can we tolerate this?

KINSMAN. Nor how you yourself when your slave-girl gave birth to a boy decided to take it,

Passed it off as yours, and instead gave the slave-girl your own baby daughter to keep.\*

MIKA. I swear by the two goddesses that you won't get away with talking like this.\*

I'll tear out your tufty pubic hair!

KINSMAN. You won't lay a finger on me!

MIKA. We'll see about that.

KINSMAN. Yes we'll see about that.

MIKA [*to another woman*]. Here, take my cloak, Philiste.

KINSMAN. If you try to touch me you'll soon find out, by Artemis—

MIKA. What will you do then?

KINSMAN. I saw you gobbling a sesame cake—well I'll make you  
 shit it back out!\*

570

LEADER. You must both stop slanging each other like this. I can see  
 there's a woman approaching.

She's running this way with an urgent look. Before she enters our  
 midst,

Please stop the noise: we need decorum to hear what her message  
 will be.

[*Enter in haste from one of the eisodoi KLEISTHENES, a beardless and  
 generally effeminate-looking figure. The piper now stops playing and the  
 metre returns to spoken iambs.*]

KLEISTHENES. Dear women, my kith and kin, who share my bent,  
 My cheeks make it easy to see that I'm one of your friends.  
 I'm *besotted* with women's affairs and I'm always your  
 spokesman.\*

Now I've heard about something important that matters to you:

It was all the talk in the Agora just this morning.

So I've come here to bring you this message and help make sure

You're vigilant, on your mettle, and don't allow

580

Something big and awful to catch you all off your guard.

LEADER. What is it, boy? It's right to call you a boy

So long as your cheeks are all smooth and hairless like this.

KLEISTHENES. Euripides, word has it, has sent a kinsman,  
 An old male inlaw, to come to this place today.

LEADER. With what end in view, what purpose behind the deed?\*

KLEISTHENES. So that all your deliberations and plans today

Can be reported back. This man is a spy!

LEADER. But how could a *man* have infiltrated the women?

KLEISTHENES. Euripides singed and removed his pubic hair

590

And dressed him to look like a woman in all respects!

KINSMAN [*to the rest*]. Do you find these claims believable? What  
 man's

So stupid he'd let his pubic hair be plucked?

I don't believe it, by the venerable goddesses two!\*

KLEISTHENES. You're talking nonsense. I wouldn't have brought  
 this message

If I hadn't found out from people who know it for certain.

LEADER. A grave and terrible matter is being reported.

Come, women, we cannot afford to procrastinate.  
 We must undertake a search and look for this man  
 Who is here somewhere concealed in our very own midst. 600  
 [To KLEISTHENES] You too must help us find him—that way  
 you'll earn  
 Our thanks twice over, o spokesman of ours in the city.\*

[*The women in general, with encouragement from KLEISTHENES, start to look at one another suspiciously. The KINSMAN is visibly alarmed but tries to avoid attention.*]

KLEISTHENES [to MIKA]. Let's start with you—who are *you*?  
 KINSMAN [*aside*]. Oh no,  
 I'm trapped!

KLEISTHENES. You must all be scrutinized.  
 KINSMAN [*aside*]. I'm in serious trouble!  
 MIKA. You dare to ask who I am? I'm Kleonymos' wife!\*

KLEISTHENES. Can you all confirm this woman's the person  
 she says?

LEADER. Yes, we know her well. But examine the rest of them too.

KLEISTHENES. Well who's this one over here, the one who's  
 carrying

A baby?

MIKA. My wet-nurse, that's who.

KINSMAN [*slipping away*]. I'm really done for!

KLEISTHENES. Hey you, where d'you think you're going? Come  
 back. What's wrong? 610

KINSMAN. I need to urinate. Don't dare to stop me!

KLEISTHENES. Very well, go ahead if you must. But I'll wait for  
 you here.

[*The KINSMAN goes over to one side and squats down as if to urinate like a woman. KLEISTHENES stands warily nearby.*]

LEADER. Be sure you wait and watch her like a hawk.

She's the only woman we don't recognize at all.

KLEISTHENES. This urination is very protracted.

KINSMAN. Yes, friend,

My bladder is sore from eating pungent cress.

KLEISTHENES [*grabbing him*]. Don't give me such twaddle.

Come over here with me.



KINSMAN. Why drag me like this? I'm not feeling well.

KLEISTHENES. Just tell me

Who your husband is.

KINSMAN [*blustering*]. What, the name of my husband, you mean?

You surely know what's-his-name from Kothokidai deme.\* 620

KLEISTHENES. Which what's-his-name do you mean?

KINSMAN. What's-his-name, the one

Who with what's-his-name, son of what's-his-name—

KLEISTHENES. Pure baloney!

Have you come to this festival before?

KINSMAN. Of course!

For years and years.

KLEISTHENES. Then who shares your tent with you?\*

KINSMAN. It's what's-her-name.

KLEISTHENES. I give up! It's more of your piffle!

MIKA [*intervening*]. Step aside. I'll test her better myself with questions

About last year's rites. [*To KLEISTHENES*] But *you* must move away

To make sure as a man you don't hear our secrets.

[*KLEISTHENES steps back. MIKA turns to the KINSMAN.*]

Now tell me

What sacred rite was the first we were told to perform?

KINSMAN. Let me see, what *was* it came first? [*Thinks.*] We started to drink! 630

MIKA. And what came next after that?

KINSMAN. We drank some toasts.

MIKA [*balked*]. Someone *gave* you this information! But what was third?

KINSMAN. Xenylla asked for a bowl, as no piss-pot was there.

MIKA. You're talking rot! Come back here, Kleisthenes.

We've found the man you mean—it's *him*!

KLEISTHENES. What now, then?

MIKA. Remove all his clothes. He's telling a pack of lies.

KINSMAN. You mean you'll strip naked a woman who's had nine children?

[KLEISTHENES, *grappling with the KINSMAN, sets to work pulling off his woman's dress and revealing what is underneath it—including his phallus.*]

KLEISTHENES. Untie that breast-band quickly, you shameless person!\*

MIKA. What a lusty, muscular body she seems to have.\*

And by Zeus she hasn't got breasts like the rest of us women! 640

KINSMAN. That's because I'm barren and never got pregnant once.

MIKA. You say that now but you claimed that you'd had nine children!

KLEISTHENES. Stand upright! Where are you pushing your prick down there?

[*The KINSMAN makes increasingly desperate efforts to hide his phallus, pushing it backwards and forwards between his legs as the other characters keep moving to try to see it.*]

MIKA [*excited*]. Oh, I saw it peep out at the back! What a lovely colour!

KLEISTHENES. Well where is it now?

MIKA. It's come back out at the front.

KLEISTHENES. It's not visible here.

MIKA. No, it's round at the back once again.

KLEISTHENES. You've got your own isthmus, my fellow. You're pushing your prick  
Back and forth more often than goods on the causeway at  
Korinth.\*

MIKA. The filthy bastard! So *that's* why he vilified us  
For Euripides' sake.

650

KINSMAN [*aside*]. I'm a godforsaken fool!

What a terrible mess I've managed to get myself into.

MIKA. Well what should we do about this?

KLEISTHENES. Keep guarding him here,  
Make sure he can't wriggle away and make his escape.  
Meanwhile I'll inform the Prytaneis all about it.\*

[*Exit KLEISTHENES by the same eisodos by which he entered. The*

CHORUS *now moves into formation, performing/miming the actions referred to by its LEADER, who chants to the piper's accompaniment.*]

LEADER. We ought to light our torches now and gather ourselves for action.

Let's gird our loins as men would do and remove our heavy cloaks.

We need to find if anyone else has infiltrated our meeting.

Let's sprint around the whole of the Pnyx and inspect the tents and pathways.\*

[*The CHORUS's movements continue with a rhythmically heightened impetus.*]

Onwards then! And first of all we need to dart with nimble feet,  
Scour the place from top to bottom, but treading stealthily as  
well.

660

Vacillation's not allowed—no time for hesitation this.

I myself shall lead our action, running around in circles here.

[*The CHORUS's movements of urgent investigation now continue in fully lyric form with choreographed dancing in a circle around the edges of the orchêstra.*]

CHORUS. Onwards, follow the tracks, search quickly everywhere  
To see if lurking in this place  
Some other man is hiding.  
Turn your gaze in all directions, first this way,  
Then over there, then here again,  
Investigate with care in every corner!

If we catch a doer of impious deeds  
He'll be fully punished, and in addition  
We'll make an example of him to the rest  
To show the price of outrage and injustice  
And godless behaviour.

670

He'll then admit the gods are manifest,\*  
He'll show the need

For all the human race to reverence deities,  
To observe traditional rituals  
And be scrupulous in doing what's right.  
If they fail to act like this, the consequence

For anyone caught in breach of piety  
 Will be to rage with madness, become unhinged,  
 And demonstrate to the world, 680  
 Both women and other mortals,  
 That infringements of law and piety  
 Are swiftly avenged by god!

LEADER. Everywhere has been explored as well as we could hope  
 to do.

No one else has been exposed as hiding in our gathering here.

[*By this stage, MIKA is holding her baby again (cf. 608–9). As the CHORUS ends its dance, the KINSMAN moves towards MIKA, snatches her baby, and runs with it to the altar at the centre of the orchêstra, where he picks up a sacrificial knife and adopts a menacing posture.*]

MIKA. Eeek!

Stop! Where do you think you're going? Come back, come  
 back!

Oh dear, please somebody help me! He's got my baby.\* 690  
 He snatched it from my tits and is running away.

KINSMAN. Screech all you like! You won't get your baby back  
 If you don't let me go. [*Melodramatically*] Right here on this  
 sacred surface

This sacrificial knife will open its veins  
 And the blood will drench the altar.

MIKA. O woe is me!

O women, please come to my aid! Raise the cry of battle,  
 Erect a trophy to mark our fight.\* Don't stand  
 And watch me deprived of my only child.

CHORUS. Scandal, scandal!

O Fates\* who rule us, what strange 700  
 Apparition do I behold?

[*The piper accompanies the following lines, which are chanted in 'recitative'.*]

LEADER. Everything in the world, it seems, abounds in brazen  
 shamelessness.

Stunned we are, yes stunned, o women, by the further deed this  
 man's performed.

KINSMAN. Stunned you'll be for sure until I knock your stubbornness out of your heads.

LEADER. Terrible then this situation, terrible like no other we've seen.

MIKA. Terrible in the extreme indeed—he's snatched my baby and grips it tight.

[*In the following lyric exchange, the KINSMAN too delivers his lines in song.*]

CHORUS. How could anyone disagree with that,  
When this man's actions display no shame?

KINSMAN. But I haven't yet reached the limit!

CHORUS. However you came to be here 710  
Don't think you can simply escape and boast  
That you did this deed then slipped through our grasp.  
A nasty fate awaits you!

KINSMAN. May no such outcome ever befall me—I pray that  
it won't.

CHORUS. But who of all the immortal gods would ever  
Come down as your ally in such injustice?

KINSMAN. You blabber in vain! I'll never release this female child.

CHORUS. By the two goddesses, you won't carry on gloating about  
your violence

Or uttering your impious words. 720  
For these godless actions we'll pay you back  
In the way you deserve.  
The winds have suddenly changed direction, your luck  
Is carrying you towards big trouble.

LEADER [*to MIKA*]. Time for you and some other women to go and  
bring some logs out here,  
Then light a blaze around this scoundrel and set him on fire  
without delay.\*

[*During the following lines MIKA and her NURSE, followed by some other women, go inside the stage building and reappear with pieces of wood, which they proceed to place in a circle round the KINSMAN.*]

MIKA. Let's go inside to fetch some firewood, nurse.

[*To KINSMAN*] I'll soon reduce you to a lump of half-burnt  
charcoal!

KINSMAN [*defiantly*]. Go ahead and stoke a fire! But let's  
remove

730

This little dress from the child. Your death, o baby,  
Is the fault of just one person—your very own mother. [*Removes  
the dress.*]

What's *this*? No baby girl after all but a leather wineskin!  
It's full of wine too—and wearing Persian bootees!\*  
O dissolute women, taking bibulousness to extremes!  
You go to such lengths to contrive your supplies of wine.  
Good business for innkeepers—but bad for us husbands.  
No wonder you smash your pots and spoil your weaving.\*

MIKA. Pile up the firewood, nurse, all the way around him.

KINSMAN. Go ahead and pile it up! But answer me this:

740

Do you say you're this baby's mother?

MIKA.

And for nine full months\*

I carried it.

KINSMAN. Carried it, did you?

MIKA.

By Artemis, yes!

KINSMAN [*holding it up*]. And filled with the cheapest plonk?

MIKA.

But

look what you've done!

You shameless thing, you've removed my baby's dress  
Even though it's so tiny.

KINSMAN.

So tiny? The poor little thing!

What's its age? Let me see: a vintage of three or four?\*

MIKA. Roughly that—but born at a Dionysiac feast.\*

Now give it me back.

KINSMAN [*gesturing*]. No I won't, by Apollo right here.\*

MIKA. Then we'll set you alight.

KINSMAN.

Go ahead then and set me alight.

But this baby girl here will be slaughtered the moment you do. 750

MIKA. No don't, I implore you! Do whatever you want to *me*

But spare this baby.

KINSMAN.

What maternal instincts you have!

All the same this baby girl's about to be slaughtered.

MIKA. Oh no, my child! Quick, nurse, pass a ritual bowl—

I need to catch the blood of my child as it's spilt.

KINSMAN. Hold the bowl right there: I'll do you this favour at  
least.

[MIKA *holds up her bowl towards the KINSMAN, who takes his knife and carries out the 'sacrificial' deed but does not let MIKA catch as much 'blood' / wine as she was expecting. While this action is taking place, KRITYLLA re-enters from the eisodos through which she exited at 458. She is carrying a torch.*]

MIKA. Damnation on you! How mean and unkind you are.

KINSMAN. And the skin itself is the priestess's perk to keep.\*

KRITYLLA. What's the priestess's perk?

KINSMAN. This skin. Here, take it  
yourself.

KRITYLLA. O poor, poor Mika, who's left you drained like this? 760  
Who's taken your darling child away from you?

MIKA. This scoundrel here! But now that you're back with us,  
I want you to guard him while *I* fetch Kleisthenes  
And report to the Prytaneis everything this man's done.

[MIKA *exits by an eisodos. KRITYLLA stands guard over the KINSMAN.*]

KINSMAN [*aside*]. Let me see, what scheme can I find for getting  
rescued?

What attempt? What clever idea? The one who's to blame  
And who managed to get me into this terrible mess  
Is not to be seen—not yet. What messenger then  
Could I send to him? I know a device of course  
From his play *Palamedes*. Just like that man I'll write 770  
A message on oars and throw—[*pausing*] but I don't have the oars.\*  
Well where could I find some oars? Where on earth  
could I get them?

[*Looking round*] Suppose I used these tablets instead of  
the oars?\*

I could scratch a message then scatter them. That's much better!  
They're made of wood after all and those oars were wooden.

[*He now breaks into song, like a tragic hero at a moment of great intensity. While singing he uses his knife to carve messages onto the votive tablets and then hurls them in various directions.*]

O hands of mine,  
You must grasp an ingenious task!  
Come, tablets of polished timber,

Receive the tracks of my chisel,  
Heralds of my toils. Alas!  
This letter *rho* is awkward.\*  
Go on, go on! What furrow do you cut?  
Proceed, make haste, down every street,  
This way, that way, without delay!

[*The KINSMAN remains at the altar, still guarded by KRITYLLA, while the CHORUS comes forward to take up formation for the parabasis.*]

[PARABASIS: 785–845]

LEADER. Step forward, then, let's praise ourselves: self-eulogy is called for.\*  
In contrast, every *man* has nothing but insults to speak about women.  
They say we're a plague on the human race and the source of every evil:  
Of quarrels and strife, of grievous discord, of grief and war. But tell us:  
If we're such a plague, why *marry* us then, if you really think we're so bad,  
And why forbid us to leave the house or even to peep from our doors,\*  
What makes you quite so eager to *keep inside* what you think is an evil?  
And if some woman does leave her home and you find her outside the house,  
You become insane with rage even though you ought to be filled with joy  
At finding that something you think is evil has left and vacated your house.  
Or suppose we visit each other's houses then fall asleep after dancing:.\*  
Every male who finds us lying on couches prowls round and fancies this 'evil'!  
Or suppose we peek from the door of our house, you all want a sight of this 'evil';  
And if the woman's abashed and steps back, that only heightens the lust



That each of you feels for a further glimpse of this 'evil' you saw  
peeking out.\*

We women are actually better than you, and here's a proof that  
reveals it. 800

Let's put to the test which group is *worse*. We women assert it's men,  
But you say it's us. Let's examine the question by setting up  
contrasts between us,

In each case placing the name of a woman and man right side  
by side.

Take Nausimache and Charminos: he's inferior—what could be  
clearer?\*

Here's a further example: take Kleophon—far worse than the tart  
Salabaccho!\*

No man even tries to compete with Aristomache, Marathonian  
woman,

And the same is true where Stratonike's military might is  
concerned.\*

But as for last year's Councillors, not one could match Euboule.  
They abandoned office to somebody else: they couldn't deny it  
themselves.\*

So that's why we boast that women are better, much better, than  
all you men. 810

No woman would steal vast sums of money from the city's public  
funds

Then ride a chariot up the Akropolis hill. The most she'd filch,  
Say a basket of wheat from her husband's stores, she always pays  
back the same day.\*

There are many men who steal like that:

We could name them if we wanted.

We could also prove that men outdo us

As greedy gluttons and violent muggers

And silly buffoons and kidnappers too.

And there's one other thing: men are worse than us

At conserving ancestral customs. 820

Right up to this day we women have kept

Our weaving equipment, our baskets of wool,

And our parasols too!\*

But as for the menfolk we live alongside,

In numerous cases they've managed to lose

The spears their families handed down,  
While quite a few others have thrown from their shoulders  
While out on campaign—  
Well, what else but their parasols too!\*

*Numberless* complaints we women could find good grounds to  
bring against 830

All the men—yes numberless, but one that looms above the rest.  
Think of a woman whose son grows up to become a person of  
serious note:

Army officer, general even—*she* herself should have prestige:  
Front-row seating should be her right at the Stenia and the  
Skira too,

Every festival, in fact, which all we women can call our own.\*

Women, however, whose sons grow up as wretched cowards—you  
know the sort:

Warship captains who shirk their duty or helmsmen who can't do  
their job—

*They* should sit with hair cropped close behind the mothers of  
citizens brave.\*

After all, o city of Athens, what argument could justify

Seating at the front Hyperbolos' mother in robes of glistening  
white, 840

Hair left hanging down behind her, with Lamachos' mother right  
next to her,

Lending money, what's more, to others, when any woman who  
borrows from her

Ought to refuse to pay the interest Hyperbolos' mother demands  
from her,

Ought in fact to refuse to pay the loan at all, but instead  
should say:

'*You* deserve no fruit from your loans: how could you, given the  
fruit of your loins!'

[*As the CHORUS steps back, the KINSMAN once again starts peering  
round anxiously from the altar.*]

KINSMAN. I've developed a squint, looking out for him. He's late!

I wonder what's holding him up. I know what it is:

He must be ashamed of that boring work, *Palamedes*.

Well which of his plays can I use to entice him here?

I've got it! I'll act out that recent play, the *Helen*.\* 850

At least I'm already wearing a female costume.

KRITYLLA. What's this latest mischief of yours, this constant fretting?

You'll soon have a Helen that's more than you bargained for

If you don't keep quiet till one of the Prytaneis comes.

[*Ignoring the warning, the KINSMAN adopts the stylized posture and manner of a tragic actor and maintains it in the face of KRITYLLA's hostility.*]

KINSMAN. Lo I behold the virginal springs of the Nile,

Which in the place of heaven's moisture bedew

Egypt's white plain, where black purge-lovers dwell.\*

KRITYLLA. You're a scoundrel all right, I swear by Hekate's torch!\*

KINSMAN. The land of my birth is one of high renown,

Sparta. My father was Tyndareos.\* 860

KRITYLLA. You blackguard,

Claiming *him* as your father? Phrynonidas more likely, that's who.\*

KINSMAN. I was given the name of Helen.

KRITYLLA. What, a *woman* again,

Before you've paid for that earlier female charade?

KINSMAN. For my sake, numerous souls by Skamander's waters\*

Met their death.

KRITYLLA. And I wish that had happened to you as well!

KINSMAN. Now I myself am here. But my wretched husband,

Menelaos himself, remains far out of sight.

Why, then, am I still alive?

KRITYLLA. 'Cos the ravens aren't hungry!\*

[*Enter EURIPIDES from one of the side entrances: he is draped in rags and seaweed, supposedly in keeping with the plight of the shipwrecked Menelaos in his play Helen. In what follows EURIPIDES ostentatiously matches his KINSMAN's paratragic manner in the face of KRITYLLA's down-to-earth interventions.*]

KINSMAN. But I feel a kind of fluttering in my heart.

O Zeus, deceive me not—don't dash my hopes!\* 870

EURIPIDES. To whose domain do these dark halls belong?

Is it one who might give shelter to shipwrecked strangers

Who've struggled in storms on the ocean's rolling swell?

KINSMAN. This palace belongs to Proteus.

KRITYLLA. Proteus, eh?

Godforsaken rogue! [*To EURIPIDES*] He's a liar, by the goddesses two!

It's a good ten years since Proteas dropped dead.\*

EURIPIDES. What shore is this on which we've beached our bark?

KINSMAN. Egypt.

EURIPIDES. Alas, alas! How far off course.

KRITYLLA. Don't believe a single word from this scumbag here!

He's talking drivel. It's the Thesmophorion here.\* 880

EURIPIDES. Is Proteus himself at home or far abroad?

KRITYLLA. Your journey's clearly left you seasick, stranger.

I told you before that Proteas is *dead*,

But you nonetheless ask if he's here at home or not.

EURIPIDES. O woe, he's dead! But where was his body entombed?

KINSMAN. His grave stands here, the very spot where I'm seated.

KRITYLLA [*to KINSMAN*]. You deserve to rot—and rot you will, I promise!

How dare you describe this altar as somebody's grave!

EURIPIDES [*to KINSMAN*]. Wherefore, o woman, do you rest where tombs are laid,

Your head enveiled in grief. 890

KINSMAN. Under duress

To link my bed in marriage to Proteus' son.

KRITYLLA. Still trying to fool this stranger here, you wretch?

[*To EURIPIDES*] This fellow came here, o stranger, with wicked motives.

He came to steal gold jewellery from the women.\*

KINSMAN. Snarl all you like and hurl reproaches at me!

EURIPIDES [*to KINSMAN*]. O woman, what crone is this who denigrates you?

KINSMAN. Theonoe, Proteus's daughter.\*

KRITYLLA. Strike me down

If I'm not Kritylla, Antitheos' wife, from Gargettos!\*

And *you're* a scoundrel.

KINSMAN. Waste all the breath you want!

I shall never allow myself to marry your brother 900

And betray Menelaos my husband, who's still at Troy.

EURIPIDES. What did you say, o woman? Turn round your gaze.\*

KINSMAN. I feel embarrassed: my cheeks have been defiled.\*

EURIPIDES. What thing is this? I lose the power of speech.

Ye gods, what sight do I behold? Who are you?

KINSMAN. I ask you too: the same thought holds us both.

EURIPIDES. Are you Greek or are you a woman born in this land?

KINSMAN. A Greek. But I too wish to ask the same.

EURIPIDES. To me, o woman, you look like Helen herself.

KINSMAN. And you to me, in your seaweed, like Menelaos. 910

EURIPIDES. You've rightly identified your hapless husband.

KINSMAN. You've come, you've come at last to your spouse's  
hearth!

[*Breaking into song*] Hold, hold me, husband, clutch me in your  
arms,

Come, let me kiss you! Take, take, take, *take* me  
away

At once!

KRITYLLA [*blocking them*]. By the goddesses two, there'll be big  
trouble

In the form of a whack from this torch if anyone takes you!

EURIPIDES. Do you mean to prevent me from taking my  
very own wife,

The daughter of Tyndareos, back to Sparta with me?\*

KRITYLLA. Oh no, you too are a scoundrel like him, now  
I see it. 920

You're hatching a plot between you. So that explains why  
You were both Egyptians before! [*Glancing off*] But he'll still be  
punished:

Here's one of the Prytaneis coming, an Archer beside him.

[*Enter the PRYTANIS from one of the side entrances, accompanied by the  
Skythian ARCHER, whose equipment includes a bow and quiver of arrows,  
a whip, and a large knife. EURIPIDES starts to move away towards  
the opposite side entrance.*]

EURIPIDES [*to KINSMAN*]. This is looking bad—I've no choice but  
to slip away here.

KINSMAN. And leave me in the lurch? What then?

EURIPIDES. Stay calm.

I'll never betray you, so long as there's breath in my body,  
Unless my ample stock of schemes should fail me. [*Exits.*]

KINSMAN. Well that was a ploy that failed to come up with the goods!

PRYTANIS [*to KRITYLLA*]. Is this the scoundrel that Kleisthenes told us about?

[*To KINSMAN*] Hey you, stop skulking there. [*To ARCHER*] Escort him inside, 930  
Tie him up on the plank, then bring him back here outside\*  
And stand guard over him, making quite sure that no one  
Gets anywhere near him. But keep your whip to hand  
And strike anyone who approaches.

KRITYLLA. That's right! Just now  
A man nearly grabbed him—an Egyptian sailor, I think.\*

[*As the ARCHER starts to manhandle him towards the door, the KINSMAN takes the hand of the PRYTANIS in a supplicatory gesture.*]

KINSMAN. O Prytanis, please, I beg you by this right hand  
Which you always hold cupped in the hope of receiving a bribe,  
Do me one small favour although my death is near.

PRYTANIS. What favour is that?

KINSMAN. Please give the Archer instructions  
To remove my clothes before I'm tied on the plank. 940  
As an old man in a woman's dress and headscarf,  
I'll prompt public derision by giving a feast to the ravens.

PRYTANIS. You've got to be bound as you are; the Council decided.  
It's to show the passers-by what a scoundrel you are.

KINSMAN. Aaaaagh! [*Melodramatically*] O female dress, what deeds  
you have wrought!

All hope of rescue has vanished from sight for ever.

[*The ARCHER now pulls the KINSMAN into the stage building. The PRYTANIS and KRITYLLA exit by one of the eisodoi.*]

LEADER. Come, let us perform the usual dances expected upon  
this occasion

When we women maintain the sacred rites for the goddesses,  
mother and daughter.

Like us, Pauson keeps ritual fast,\*  
Frequently addressing these same gods 950  
And praying to them that he like us  
May observe these rites for ever.

[The CHORUS comes forward and takes up formation for a dance whose first part is circular.]

CHORUS. Step forward, advance!

With nimble steps come form a circle,  
 Make a chain hand by hand,  
 Each one of you joining the rhythm of dance.  
 Start moving with fleetest footwork.  
 Keep a watchful eye in all directions,  
 Glancing round and round, for the shape of the dance.

As you dance sing the race of Olympian gods, *Strophe* 960  
 Combine loud praise of them with ecstatic dancing.

But if anyone thinks we women will slander\* *Antistrophe*  
 Male citizens while we're in this shrine, he's crazy!

Instead we need  
 To prepare for something new  
 By stopping the lovely movements of circling dance.

Step forward and celebrate the lyre-god, *Strophe*  
 Apollo, and bow-carrying 970  
 Artemis, our sacred mistress.  
 Hail, god who works from afar,  
 Confer victory upon us!\*

And Hera, fulfiller of wedlock,  
 Let us rightly sing her praises too:  
 She joins with us in all our dances  
 And guards the keys of marriage.\*

Hermes, god of pastures, I entreat, *Antistrophe*  
 With Pan and the friendly Nymphs,  
 To demonstrate heartily with laughter  
 The joy they take in all 980  
 The movements of our dances.  
 Each one of you heartily rouse  
 The joy of the dance for us and the gods.  
 Let's perform our usual steps, o women—  
 Why not, we're fasting in any case!

Come leap and twist with springy rhythm!  
Embellish the song throughout!  
And be our leader yourself,  
O ivy-wearing Bacchic god,\*  
Master of ours! In revels  
That love the dance I'll sing your name.

Euaios, son of Zeus, *Strophe* 990  
Bromios, Semele's child,\*  
Who delights in dances  
On mountain slopes, with the Nymphs' lovely  
songs,  
O Euaios, Euaios, euoi!  
You take pleasure in joining the dance!

And all about you resound *Antistrophe*  
Kithaironian echoes,\*  
As the darkly forested mountains,  
Deep in shade, rumble with their rocky glens.  
Encircling your head the ivy  
Blossoms with glistening tendrils. 1000

[*The ARCHER comes out from the stage building dragging a large plank on which the KINSMAN is now shackled.*]

ARCHER. 'Ere den go cry away in open air.\*

KINSMAN. I beg you, Archer—

ARCHER. No beggin' me na, ye dont.

KINSMAN. Please slacken the clamp.

ARCHER. Okay, I do de clamp.

[*The ARCHER roughly hits the metal clamp which attaches the KINSMAN's neck to the plank.*]

KINSMAN. No, help, I'm dying! You're making it even tighter!

ARCHER. Ye want it more an' tight?

KINSMAN. Aaagh, aaagh! I'm choking!

Damnation on you!

ARCHER. Shut mouth, ol' man, ye dyin'.

I fetchy mat for me to guard ye den.



[The ARCHER goes back briefly into the stage building and reappears with a mat on which he proceeds to lie down and fall asleep.]

KINSMAN. Such a life of ease Euripides has brought me!

[Bending his head as far as he can to one side, the KINSMAN shows sudden signs of excitement. From one of the side entrances EURIPIDES makes a sudden, brief appearance in the costume of Perseus, and gestures elaborately towards the KINSMAN.]

But what? O gods! Zeus Saviour! There's hope after all.

It looks as though Euripides won't betray me.

1010

He just jumped out as Perseus and gave a signal

That I need to play the part of Andromeda now.\*

Well I've got the bondage at least! It's clear to me

That he'll come to rescue me. What else could he mean?

[The KINSMAN, accompanied by the piper, now starts to sing an elaborate monody which oscillates between the role of Andromeda and the character's masculine identity.]

Dear maidens dear,\*

If only I might escape and

Elude the Skythian's watch!

Do you hear my voice, o you who sing out from the cave?\*

Nod your agreement, allow me

To return to my wife.

1020

Pitiless the one who bound me here

As the most woebegone of mortals.

I barely escaped the old woman's clutches,

The putrid hag, but I still came to ruin!

This Skythian has long stood guard

And has hung me here, wretched and unbefriended,

As a meal for the ravens.

As you see, I cannot join the dances

Nor with young girls of my own age

Do I stand in fine adornment,

1030

But instead in heavy chains ensnackled

I'm exposed as food for a sea-monster—Glauketes!\*

With no wedding-song

Of joy, but a dirge of enchainment

Lament for me, o women,  
 For the miserable things I have suffered  
 In my misery, o woe, o woe!  
 And in addition from kith and kin more outrageous sufferings,  
 Though I, a woman, begged the man, pouring out  
 A tearful lament for my death, 1040  
 Alas, alas, o grief, o grief,  
 Yet he shaved me first  
 And swathed me in saffron,\*  
 And in addition sent me up here  
 To this shrine exclusive to women.  
 I sob for my fate  
 Brought to birth by a malign spirit.  
 Accursed I am!  
 Who will not look upon my  
 Suffering as unenviable, so full of evils?  
 If only for me a fiery star falling from the Aither— 1050  
 Would annihilate this barbarian!  
 No longer is beholding the sun's immortal flame  
 Dear to me, since I was suspended here  
 In a state of throat-severing anguish, ready  
 For a rapid route to death.

[*Enter EURIPIDES from the stage building, dressed as an old woman and playing the part of Echo (n. on 1018) from his own play Andromeda.*]

EURIPIDES. Greetings, dear girl. But as for your father, Kepheus,  
 Who exposed you here—may the gods annihilate him!

KINSMAN. But who are *you* who pity this plight of mine?

EURIPIDES. Echo—who sings back your words in mocking voice.

Last year in this very same place where we're standing now 1060

I too, like you, played a Euripidean role.\*

But come, my child, you need to do your thing,

Cry pitiful tears.

KINSMAN [*sarcastically*]. And *you'll* be crying soon after!

EURIPIDES. Just leave that to me. But now begin your lines.

[*The KINSMAN starts to chant, initially in the persona of Andromeda—till the echoing of his words by EURIPIDES, now standing just inside the door of the stage building, increasingly exasperates him.*]

- KINSMAN. O sacred Night  
On how long a course you drive the horses  
Of your chariot across the star-studded arc  
Of the sacred Aither  
And revered Olympus's spaces.\*
- EURIPIDES. . . . Olympus's spaces
- KINSMAN. Why do I, Andromeda, beyond all others 1070  
Suffer such a woeful destiny?
- EURIPIDES. . . . woeful destiny
- KINSMAN. Forlorn facing death.
- EURIPIDES. . . . forlorn facing death
- KINSMAN. You'll kill me, crone, with your babbling.
- EURIPIDES. . . . with your  
babbling
- KINSMAN. By Zeus, your grating interventions  
Are just too much.
- EURIPIDES. . . . just too much
- KINSMAN. Let me sing, good man, a solo song,  
And do me a favour. Please stop.
- EURIPIDES. . . . please stop
- KINSMAN. To the crows with you!
- EURIPIDES. . . . to the crows with you
- KINSMAN. What's wrong? 1080
- EURIPIDES. . . . what's wrong
- KINSMAN. You're crazy!
- EURIPIDES. . . . you're  
crazy
- KINSMAN. Hang yourself!
- EURIPIDES. . . . hang yourself
- KINSMAN. Get knotted!
- EURIPIDES. . . . get  
knotted
- ARCHER [*making, to* KINSMAN]. Wot ye jabberin'?
- EURIPIDES. . . . wot ye  
jabberin'
- ARCHER. Me Pritanees call.
- EURIPIDES. . . . me Pritanees call
- ARCHER. Wot wrong?
- EURIPIDES. . . . wot wrong

ARCHER. Wot de voice I 'ear?

EURIPIDES. . . . wot de voice I 'ear

ARCHER [*to KINSMAN*]. More jabber?

EURIPIDES. . . . more jabber

ARCHER. Ye'll be sore.

EURIPIDES. . . . Ye'll

be sore

ARCHER. Ye mockin' mi?

EURIPIDES. . . . mockin' mi

KINSMAN. It's not me speaking, it's this woman right here! 1090

EURIPIDES. . . . this woman right here

ARCHER. Where is dat bitch?

KINSMAN. She's running away.

ARCHER [*bemildered*]. Oy stop, where ye runnin'?

Ye pay for dis.

EURIPIDES. . . . ye pay for dis

ARCHER. Won't ye shut your trap?

EURIPIDES. . . . won't ye shut your trap

ARCHER. Get 'old o' de bitch.

EURIPIDES. . . . get 'old o' de bitch

ARCHER. Ye just a jabberin' blasted wumman!

[EURIPIDES *disappears inside the stage building but soon reappears in a new costume—with winged boots and the decapitated Gorgon's head—that marks him as the hero Perseus.*]

EURIPIDES. O gods, what foreign land is this I've reached

With speed of sandalled feet? Straight through the Aither

I cut my path with movements of wingéd feet— 1100

I Perseus who navigate my way to Argos

With the Gorgon's head.

ARCHER. Wot's dat? Ye got de 'ead

O' Gorgos de Council scribe?\*

EURIPIDES. No, the *Gorgon's* head

I'm talking about.

ARCHER. Me too, de 'ead o' Gorgos.

EURIPIDES. But ah! What crag is this I see, and a maiden

Just like a god in beauty yet moored like a ship?

KINSMAN. O stranger, take pity on me, a forsaken woman.

Release me from these bonds.

ARCHER. Shut up, no jabber!

Ye blasted ding, ye go to die but jabber?

EURIPIDES. I pity you, maiden, when seeing you hanging here. 1110

ARCHER. No maiden diss but is very naughty ol' man

An' thievy an' wicked.

EURIPIDES. What rot, you Skythian slave!

This woman you see is Andromeda, Kepheus' child.

ARCHER [*pointing at KINSMAN's phallus*]. Dat ding no cunty—no  
see wot whopper it is?

EURIPIDES. Come, give me your hand, young girl, and let me hold it.

Please, Skythian—don't forget, all human beings

Suffer some affliction. In my own case this girl

Has aroused intense desire.

ARCHER. I no envy ye.

But if de arse wa' facin' diss way round,

I let ye take an' bugga 'im on de plank. 1120

EURIPIDES. Why won't you let me, Skythian, set her free

Then lie with her upon our nuptial bed?

ARCHER. If want very much to bugga de ol' man den,

Drill 'ole in plank and fuck 'is arse from back.

EURIPIDES. No, no, I'll free her bonds.

ARCHER. I whip ye den!

[*A brief scuffle takes place, with the ARCHER forcing EURIPIDES back,  
first with his whip and then with a large knife.*]

EURIPIDES. I'll not give up.

ARCHER. I got ye den,

I chop de 'ead right off wid diss big knife.

EURIPIDES. Ah, no! What next? What appeals can I turn to now?

Such things are lost on this barbarian's nature.

Bringing words of novel wisdom to bear on the stupid\* 1130

Is a vain and wasteful thing. But there's one more scheme

I can use against this fellow—this one will suit him.

[EURIPIDES *rushes off by one of the eisodoi before the ARCHER can  
apprehend him.*]

ARCHER. De nasti fox, 'e played me monkey trick!

KINSMAN. Remember, Perseus, you're leaving me all forlorn!

ARCHER. Ye want me whip ye den sum more?

[The ARCHER lies back down on his mat and falls asleep again.]

CHORUS. Pallas the lover of dances  
 I always summon to join our chorus—  
 Maiden unwed and youthful,  
 She protects our city, 1140  
 Manifesting her power, and she alone  
 Is called the holder of the keys.\*  
 Appear to us, goddess, rightful hater of tyrants!  
 The assembled women call upon you.  
 I pray you bring with you  
 The goddess Peace, festival-lover.  
 You too we bid come in benign kindness,  
 Our mistress deities, into our grove\*  
 Where it is not permitted for men to behold 1150  
 Our solemn rites, in the place where with torches  
 You reveal to us an immortal vision.  
 Come into our presence, we implore you,  
 O supreme mistresses of the Thesmophoria.  
 If ever in the past you answered our prayers and came,  
 Come now again, we beseech you, to this very place.\*

[EURIPIDES reappears, this time in the garments of an old woman but with his veil to one side. He carries a harp and is accompanied by ELAPHION and TEREDON.]

EURIPIDES. If all you women would like to make a truce 1160  
 That would last for ever with me, well now's the time,  
 On the basis you'll never again be slandered by me  
 In any respect. I'm happy to offer these terms.

LEADER. What's made you come to offer us this proposal?

EURIPIDES. This man on the plank's in fact a kinsman of mine.  
 So if he's returned to me, you'll never again  
 Be slandered by me. But if you refuse my offer,  
 I'll denounce to your husbands, as soon as they're back from  
 campaign,

All the secret plans you devise inside your homes.\*

LEADER. As far as *we're* concerned, your offer's accepted. 1170

But you'll have to persuade this Skythian slave as well.

EURIPIDES. I'm about to do it. You too, Elaphion there,

Remember to do all the things that I mentioned before.  
 So tiptoe over and start to practise your moves.  
 And you, Teredon, strike up a Persian tune.

[*The group moves towards the sleeping ARCHER. EURIPIDES covers his face with his woman's veil, TEREDON (probably miming to the main piper) strikes up an exotically sensual tune, with some additional contribution from EURIPIDES on his harp, while ELAPHION starts to gyrate sexily. After a few moments the ARCHER wakes with a jolt and jumps up.*]

ARCHER. Wad ol diss buzzin' noise? A parti wake mi?

EURIPIDES. The girl was starting to practise some of her steps.

She's going to dance at a party some men are holding.

ARCHER. She dance an' practise more, I no want stop 'er.

She 'op nice quick like flea on fleecy blankit.

1180

EURIPIDES [*to ELAPHION*]. Lift up your cloak, my child, and take it right off,

Then sit yourself on the knees of this Skythian here

And stretch out your feet—I'll remove your shoes.

ARCHER.

Ya ya!

Sit 'ere, sit 'ere, ya ya, mi nice liddle girl.

[*ELAPHION removes her cloak and sits, now naked, on the knees of the ARCHER, who starts to fondle her; she stretches out her feet for EURIPIDES to remove her shoes.*]

Ee ee! Diss tit so nice, firm like a turnip!

EURIPIDES [*to TEREDON*]. Pipe faster—don't be afraid of this Skythian now.

[*TEREDON pipes with more urgency and ELAPHION, despite the ARCHER's efforts to keep hold of her, gets up to dance again. As he watches her, the ARCHER's phallus springs up from his groin.*]

ARCHER. Wot luvly buttock! [*To his phallus*] Oy back, ye stay inside.

Okay, dat look ol nice, diss shape o' mi dick.

EURIPIDES [*to ELAPHION*]. That's enough. Here, take your cloak.

It's time for us

To be moving along.

1190

ARCHER.

But no she kiss me first?

EURIPIDES. Of course. [*To ELAPHION*] You can kiss him.

ARCHER.

Oo-oo,

oo-oo, so nice!

De tongue taste sweet as 'oney from Attika bees.

Why no she lie wid me?

EURIPIDES [*taking* ELAPHION]. Goodbye now, archer.

I'm afraid I can't oblige.

ARCHER. Ya please, ol' wumman!

Diss favour just for me.

EURIPIDES. Will you pay a drachma?\*

ARCHER. Ya ya, I pay!

EURIPIDES. Come on then, give me the money.

ARCHER. But dont 'ave money. Ye take diss quiver instead.

[EURIPIDES *takes the* ARCHER's *quiver from him and releases* ELAPHION *again.*]

EURIPIDES. You can have this back when you pay.

ARCHER [*to* ELAPHION]. Den follow me,  
child.

[*To* EURIPIDES] Stay 'ere, ol' wumman, an' guard ol' man for me.

But wot ye name?

1200

EURIPIDES. My name is Artemisia.\*

ARCHER. Me rememba den diss name: Artamouxia.

[ARCHER *and* ELAPHION *exit into the stage building*; EURIPIDES *now springs into action, removing his female cloak before setting about unfastening the* KINSMAN *from the plank.*]

EURIPIDES. Hermes, god of stealth, you're making the plan  
work well.

[*To* TEREDON] Here, run along, boy, and take this cloak with you.

Now at last I'll free this man. [*To* KINSMAN, *ironically*] Please  
show your spunk

And once you're untied run away with all your might

Back home to where you belong with your wife and children!

KINSMAN. You can count on me for that once I've been untied.

EURIPIDES. There you are, you're free—run away before

The Archer comes back to find you.

KINSMAN. I'm off right now!

[EURIPIDES *makes a speedy departure by a side exit, with* KINSMAN



*running immediately behind him. Only a moment later, ARCHER reappears from the stage building with ELAPHION.]*

Ol' lady, diss daughter o' yours is really sweet, 1210  
 No nasti at all, so soft. But where's de wumman?  
 O no, I done for! Where gone de ol' man from 'ere?  
 Ol' wumman, ol' wumman! I no like dat ol' wumman.  
 Artamouxia!  
 De wumman played trick on me! [*To ELAPHION*] Ye run  
 away now.

*[ELAPHION leaves by one of the side exits.]*

Mi quiver is lost—is really fucked to pieces!  
 Aaaaagh!

Wot I do now? Where's wumman den? Artamouxia!

LEADER. Are you asking about the old woman who carried a harp?

ARCHER. Ya ya! Ye see 'er?

LEADER [*pointing*]. She went away down there,

The woman you mean—and an old man went with her too.

ARCHER. De man wear yellow dress? 1220

LEADER. He certainly did.

*[Pointing the wrong way]* You'd probably catch him up if you  
 chased that way.

ARCHER. De lousy bitch! [*Confused*] Which way I run den now?

Artamouxia!

LEADER [*gesturing*]. Chase straight up there. Not that way!

Back over here.

It's *this* direction here. You're getting it wrong.

ARCHER. I done for but run diss way. Artamouxia! [*Exits in wrong direction.*]

LEADER. Run in pursuit—and we hope you're blown to the crows!

*[The whole CHORUS now reassembles before chanting its parting words.]*

CHORUS. We've played our games for long enough.

It's time for us to go our way,

Each woman back home.

May the two Thesmophoroi goddesses\* 1230

Repay our worship with joy.

*[Exit CHORUS.]*

## APPENDIX

### THE LOST PLAYS OF ARISTOPHANES

THE purpose of this appendix is to give general readers an impression of the scope of Aristophanes' oeuvre as a whole by providing a brief account of what we know about each of the lost plays, together with a small selection of some of the more notable fragments. The numbering of fragments follows the standard edition of Kassel and Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci*; the same numbering is used in Henderson's bilingual Loeb, *Aristophanes: Fragments* (for both works see Select Bibliography, 'Fragments'). The plays are listed in alphabetic order of their Greek titles. Incompleteness in the original is indicated by . . . , omissions from the translation by [. . .]. Abbreviations for the surviving plays of Aristophanes are the same as in the notes to the translation.

#### *Aiolosikon* (Aiolos-Sikon)

There were two versions of the play, the later staged near the end of Aristophanes' life (c.388–385) in the name of his playwright son Araros; cf. on *Kokalos* below. It is possible that at least the second version, like the surviving *Assembly-Women* and *Wealth*, had a diminished choral element and no parabasis, though fr. 9 shows that there was a chorus of women in at least one of the versions, and fr. 8 too is choral. The title (as the protagonist's name) is a compound of Aiolos (guardian of the winds: cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 10.1 ff.) and Sikon, possibly here a cook's name: the protagonist presumably had something in common with both identities. There were certainly references to food: a bakery (fr. 1), shopping in the Agora (fr. 2), boiled pig's trotters (fr. 4), onions (fr. 5), cooking utensils (fr. 7). A gluttonous Herakles (see note on *F* 62) was either mentioned or brought onto stage (fr. 11). It is likely that there was some relationship to Euripides' tragedy *Aiolos* (cf. n. on *C*. 1372), in which Makareus and Kanake committed brother–sister incest and later (after they failed to be paired in a lottery for incestuous marriages of all Aiolos' children) killed themselves. But nothing remotely like a plot can be reconstructed. There are several references to the world of women: in addition to frs. 8 and 9 there was a reference to a woman's 'perfume-case' (fr. 16).

fr. 8 (choral, probably referring to a woman, possibly to diaphanous attire: cf. *L*. 48):

And we see gleaming through,  
Just as with a new lamp,  
Everything (beneath?) the off-the-shoulder dress.

fr. 9 (female chorus singing):

No wonder, women,  
The men always lambast us  
With every kind of abuse.  
When we do our terrible deeds  
We're caught by them.

### *Amphiaraos*

Staged at Lenaia 414, directed by Philonides (who also produced *Frogs* and possibly *Wasps*: cf. on *Proagon* below). At least part of the play was set at the oracular shrine (near Oropos, to the north of Attika) of the healer-hero Amphiaraos: visitors slept in the shrine ('incubation') in the hope of finding a cure. Compare the similar procedures with the healer-god Asklepios at *We.* 653–748; fr. 21 represents/reports Amphiaraos addressing his own daughter Iaso (the same name as a daughter of Asklepios at *We.* 701). Fr. 29 may refer to a character's sexual impotence; but the plot cannot be reconstructed. The parabasis, as in several earlier Aristophanic plays, contained reflections on the playwright's own career (frs. 30–1).

fr. 21 (probably a husband addressing his wife; in preparation for incubation at the shrine?):

In the name of Zeus, go and fetch us out of the bedroom  
A cushion and pillow, from the ones that are made of linen.

fr. 28 (recitative metre, speaker and addressee uncertain):

And the snakes you supply  
Seal up in a basket,  
And stop your selling of drugs.

fr. 29 (hexameters, indicating an oracular utterance delivered from Amphiaraos' shrine):

And make the old man's loins wiggle vigorously, like a wagtail's.  
This way (the god?) will effect a healing spell.

fr. 30 (choral, from the parabasis, probably in the voice of the poet):

I know I'm doing something old-fashioned, I'm not unaware of that.

fr. 31 (choral, almost certainly, like fr. 30, from the parabasis; cf. *Geras*, fr. 130 below):

... since the time I recognized the comic bogey-mask.

### *Anagyros*

Date uncertain, but probably c.417. Anagyros was the eponymous hero of

an Athenian deme, Anagyrous (subject of a passing joke at *L.* 67–8). The main known myth about him involved a story pattern somewhat like that of Theseus, Phaidra, and Hippolytos: Anagyros took revenge on an old Athenian by making the man's concubine fall in love with his son then falsely accuse the latter of a sexual crime; when the father punished the son and discovered the truth, both he and the concubine committed suicide. Whether/how Aristophanes' play used this myth is entirely unclear. The fragments contain several references to horses, including (fr. 43) the same kind of thoroughbred racehorse mentioned at *C.* 23, 438. Other topics include the rich and poor using the same bath-houses (fr. 59). Given the 'Phaidra complex' theme (above, with Index of Names), it is striking that Euripides, *Hippolytos* 219–22 (where Phaidra deliriously imagines hunting with Hippolytos) is parodied in fr. 53. Fr. 58 is apparently a charge of plagiarism (or derivativeness) against another poet, possibly Eupolis (cf. *C.* 554).

fr. 53 (recitative, female speaker):

In the name of the gods, I lust to eat cicadas  
And crickets, after hunting them myself  
With a delicate reed.

fr. 58 (choral recitative, from the parabasis, representing the poet's viewpoint):

From the cloak belonging to me he made three simple tunics.

### *Babylonians*

An early landmark in Aristophanes' career; cf. the general Introduction, 'Aristophanes' Career in Context'. Staged at Dionysia 426, with Kallistratos as producer, it may have won first prize; it certainly caused some political controversy. If we can trust the poet's own allusions to the affair at *A.* 377–82, 502–3, 630–1, the leading politician Kleon launched an official complaint to the Council (but not, so far as we can tell, a legal prosecution) that Aristophanes had 'slandered the city in the presence of visitors'. All we know for certain is that the chorus consisted of tattooed Babylonian mill-slaves (frs. 71, 90, 95, 99). The god Dionysos was a character (fr. 75); he presumably brought the chorus with him to Athens, where he was put on trial (for what, we do not know), but given a chance to bribe demagogues to win an acquittal (fr. 75, cf. fr. 68); one of those demagogues was probably Peisander (fr. 84; cf. later references to him at *B.* 1556, *L.* 490), another *may* have been Kleon himself (if *A.* 5–8, as some scholars suppose, refers to a scene in *Babylonians* and not to a historical event). The successful general Phormion (cf. *K.* 562, *P.* 348, *L.* 804) was also mentioned (fr. 88). If, again, we can safely glean something from Aristophanes' own words at *A.* 633–42,

which it is hard not to understand as related to *Babylonians*, the play seems to have satirized the supposed ease with which Athenian assemblies could be impressed (and turned into ‘gaping-mouthed citizens’, *A.* 635, cf. fr. 67 below) by the rhetoric of allied ambassadors; it apparently also made comic material out of Athens’ treatment of her allies (*A.* 642). But how exactly these themes fitted into a plot with Dionysos and the Babylonian chorus remains obscure.

fr. 67 (probably from a narrative account of an Assembly meeting):

Every one of them had a gaping-wide mouth, just like  
Mussel-shells cracked open when roasting upon hot coals.

fr. 81 (recitative; someone anticipating the entry of the chorus):

I expect they’ll march in rows and screech in horrid barbarian tones.

### *Georgoi* (Farmers)

Probably staged at some point during 424–421, the play exploited similar thematic contrasts (war vs. peace, city vs. countryside) to those of *Acharnians* and *Peace*: nostalgia for the supposedly easy life of rural Attika was clearly evoked. But details of the plot are unknown. The sons of Hippokrates (see *C.* 1001 with n.) were mocked for the abnormal shapes of their heads (fr. 116). One fragment (102) depicts the general Nikias as a figure keen to escape from front-line politics; it may, but need not, allude to his withdrawal from command of the Pylos campaign in summer 425 (Thucydides 4.28; cf. n. on *C.* 186).

fr. 102:

(A) I want to farm the land. (B) Who’s stopping you then?  
(A) You and your friends. If I pay a thousand drachmas,  
Will you let me escape from office. (B) We’ll accept the money.  
With the payment Nikias made, that makes two thousand.

fr. 109 (choral recitative):

Let’s leave the city behind us now and return to the countryside.  
We should have gone long ago to soak in the bath and take it easy.

fr. 111 (choral song):

Peace, bringer of deep wealth, and my little pair of oxen,  
How I wish I could give up this war and then  
Dig the soil, dress the vines, have a bath and quaff  
Some wine, with a gleaming loaf and a radish.

fr. 117 (referring to a tragic poet called Meletos: cf. on frs. 156, 453 below, with n. on *F.* 1302; for Kallias cf. *F.* 428, fr. 583):

... he penetrates Kallias ...

*Geras (Old Age)*

Date uncertain. The chorus appears to have consisted of rejuvenated old men (fr. 129). Various female characters appeared, including a mother and daughter (fr. 131), a woman abandoning a lover for a bridegroom (fr. 144), and a bread-seller (fr. 129, cf. *W.* 1388 ff.). Fr. 128 *may* be an elaborate culinary metaphor for the difference between Euripides and Aischylos (cf. *F.* 941–4). Incidental details include references to someone vomiting on statues in the Agora (fr. 135) and to allotment machines (cf. *AW* 681) used for allocation of jurors to courts and for the selection of Council members from deme nominees.

fr. 128:

This vinegary, silphium-flavoured stuff, all bulbs and beet,  
Sour sauce, fig-leaves with animal brain, oregano—  
It's utter crap compared to a big piece of meat.

fr. 130 (cf. fr. 31 above):

Who can tell me where I'll find Dionysos' shrine,  
The one where bogey-masks hang on the walls?

fr. 148 (speaker possibly a brothel-keeper, male or female):

Old man, do you like your courtesans quite ripe  
Or very young, as firm as salted olives?

*Gerytades*

The title is the mock-name of a male character, roughly meaning 'Proclaimer'; we have no idea why. Our one piece of information about the plot is that it involved an embassy of poets who went down to Hades, presumably in some way to consult past masters of the art—so something a little akin to *Frogs* (though we cannot be sure of the relative chronology of the two works). We get a lively glimpse of this scenario from fr. 156. Other fragments include references to the operator of the theatrical 'crane' (fr. 160, cf. *Daidalos* fr. 192 below and *P.* 174), to someone praising the poetry of Aischylos (fr. 161), and to people eating the wax off their writing-tablets (fr. 163). It is possible that the embassy brought back personified Poetry: cf. fr. 591.84–5 (unattributed) below.

fr. 156 (beginning with a near-verbatim quotation of Euripides, *Hekabe* 1):

(A) And who to this vault of corpses and gates of darkness  
Has dared descend? (B) For each poetic genre  
We elected one man at a meeting of all the poets:  
We chose the ones we knew were Hades-tourists  
And liked to come down here. (A) You mean to say

- You have Hades-tourists up there? (B) We certainly do.  
 (A) You mean like tourists to Thrace? (B) Exactly right.  
 (A) And who are these men you mean? (B) Sannyrion first  
 From the comic poets, and then from tragedy's ranks  
 Meletos, with dithyramb's envoy Kinesias.<sup>1</sup>  
 (A) How thin and slender the hopes you're riding upon!  
 These men are so slight they'll be snatched and carried away  
 By the mighty force of the river of diarrhoea!<sup>2</sup>

### *Daidalos*

Daidalos was a mythical Cretan craftsman, designer for King Minos of the labyrinth at Knossos, and father of Ikaros, with whom he eventually fled after incurring Minos' anger (cf. on *Kokalos* below). So the play was presumably a mythological burlesque. Daidalos' ability to make 'moving statues' was referred to (fr. 202). Zeus was mentioned, or even depicted, as using metamorphosis to engage in mischievous behaviour (fr. 198). A character was suspended at one point on the theatrical crane and addressed the crane-operator (fr. 192, cf. *Gerytades*, fr. 160 above).

fr. 191 (for the motif cf. e.g. *WT* 392, 417, *L.* 107, 212–13):

All wives are the same in this respect at least:  
 They arrange to keep an adulterer as a side-dish.

### *Daitales* (Banqueters)

Aristophanes' very first play, staged in 427 (probably Lenaia), with either Kallistratos or Philonides as producer. The parabasis of *Clouds* (528–33, with my nn.) refers back to it as a precedent for *Clouds* itself, in being aimed at clever, sophisticated spectators—i.e. for being itself an 'intellectualizing' comedy (see my Introduction to *Clouds*). The link involved comic treatment of clashing educational/cultural values in contemporary Athens, in the case of *Banqueters* through the relationship between a father and a contrasting pair of sons, 'one bashful, the other an arsehole' (*C.* 529). The thematic threads were complex; there were affinities, but not a complete correspondence, with (a) the Strepsiades–Pheidippides relationship and (b) the debate between Moral and Immoral in *Clouds*. The sons, one traditional and one 'modern' in conduct, diverged at an early stage in their

<sup>1</sup> Sannyrion: a minor comedian whose plays included one called *Laughter*. Meletos: possibly the tragedian who took part in the prosecution of Sokrates; see Plato, *Apology* 19b–c, 23e, etc. Cf. the same name in fr. 117 above, 453 below. Kinesias: see Index of Names. All three figures are supposed to have been notoriously gaunt and, by comic exaggeration, suitably corpse-like for a trip to Hades.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the 'river of shit' at *F.* 146.

upbringing (fr. 206). The modern son was corrupted, according to the father, into a life of sybaritic hedonism (fr. 225); he refused to countenance traditional work on the land (fr. 232); and he abused his father with language which the latter associated with contemporary orators, showy aristocrats like Alkibiades (cf. fr. 244), and fashionable teachers of rhetoric (fr. 205, where Thrasymachos is the rhetorician memorably depicted at Plato, *Republic* 1.336b ff.). This same son, it seems (fr. 233), was reluctant to answer questions (of the kind a schoolteacher might ask) about the meaning of certain words in Homer; instead, he challenged his father and brother to explain archaic *legal* terms in Solon's law-code. Fr. 235 probably depicts the father inviting the decadent son to sing traditional sympotic poetry (and presumably being rebuffed with a more 'modern' choice of poets: cf. C. 1354–72). The chorus consisted of a kind of religious dining-club (a *thiasos*) which met in a shrine of Herakles, but their status vis-à-vis the characters is not clear.

fr. 205 (the sophisticated son abusing his father):

- (A) You coffinette and funeral myrrh and pile of wreaths!
- (B) Hah, 'coffinette'! Lysistratos gave you that word.
- (A) It won't be long before you find you're wrong-footed.
- (B) You've learnt 'wrong-footed' as well from the orators' lingo.
- (A) Your words will have an upshot, of that I'm sure.
- (B) That's Alkibiades' term, to have an 'upshot'.
- (A) Why these conjectures and all this abuse of men  
Who cultivate distinction? (B) Oh Thrasymachos!  
Which legal advocate uses these flashy retorts?

fr. 206 (one brother—probably the 'modern' one—speaking to the other):

- Do *you* have the clever ideas that *I* acquired?
- Did you not play truant from school at the earliest stage?

fr. 225 (the father describing the decadent son; recitative metre, probably from an agon):

- When I sent him to school it wasn't these things he learnt, but instead  
To drink, then sing in a rotten way, and to eat rich food  
From Syracuse, and to feast as the Sybarites do [. . .]

fr. 229 (same metre as fr. 225; probably a description of the decadent son):

- His skin as smooth as that of an eel, his hair in golden ringlets.

fr. 232 (the 'modern' son speaking; recitative metre, probably from an agon):

- When I've worn myself down with all that practice on music for pipes and  
lyres,  
Do you really expect me to dig the soil?



fr. 235 (the father speaking? See above. For the poets named, cf. *WT* 161–2):

Pick up the lyre, sing a drinking-song from Alkaïos or Anakreon.

fr. 247 (for the possible theme, cf. *C.* 1044–54):

We [or ‘he’] washed in cold water.

### *Danaids*

Evidently a play with an element of mythological burlesque: for the story of Danaos’ fifty daughters and their flight from Egypt to Argos, see esp. Aischylos, *Suppliants*. There are only faint traces of the Danaid theme as such in frs. 267 (an Egyptian word for sourdough bread), 270 (‘very Danaos-like’), 272 (Lynkeus, husband of one of the Danaids). Otherwise the fragments preserve miscellaneous details, including references to buying cheap octopus/fish in the market (fr. 258), a box for storing actors’ equipment (fr. 259), and sellers of emetics/purgatives (fr. 269). We know that there was a parabasis from the following two fragments, which reflect on the history of comedy itself (cf. e.g. the parabases of *Knights* and *Peace*), though quite what fr. 264 envisages (primitive, rustic costumes? and food for the post-play party?) is uncertain.

fr. 264 (recitative metre):

The chorus used to dance while draped with rugs and sacks of bedding,  
And ribs of beef tucked under their arms—yes, sausage and radishes too.

fr. 265 (same metre, and probably from the same passage, as fr. 264):

That’s how little trouble it was for them to compose their verses back then.

### *Dionysos Shipwrecked*

Virtually nothing is known about this play. It was included in lists of Aristophanes’ works, but it was one of four plays whose authorship was disputed by some (and attributed alternatively to the late 5th-century playwright Archippos).

### *Dramas I (also Centaur) and II (also Niobus)*

Aristophanes appears to have written two plays called *Dramas*, though some ancient scholars questioned the attribution of *Dramas* II to Aristophanes (and assigned it to the late 5th-century playwright Archippos instead; cf. the previous entry). Euripides was a character in one of the two. Little is known about the contents of either. *Dramas* I may have been connected to Herakles’ visit to the centaur Pholos and his subsequent fight with other centaurs (cf. Index of Names). Incidental references in the fragments include urination (fr. 280), a brothel (fr. 283), and lewd dancing (fr. 287).

The alternative title of *Dramas* II may denote a male equivalent of Niobe

(see n. on *F.* 912), who was mentioned in the play (fr. 294). There seems to have been a scene set in Hades (fr. 289, someone speaking for ‘those of us here below’); fr. 290, in which someone’s lamp goes out, might also belong there. There was mention of Chairephon, Sokrates’ companion (see Index of Names), as a ‘thief’ (fr. 295).

One of the two plays included the ritual of weighing sacrificial animals for the Apatouria (nn. on *WT* 558, *F.* 798): a speaker asks another to press down the scales to make an animal seem heavier than it is (fr. 299).

### *Eirene* (Peace) II

We cannot be sure whether this was a revised version of the surviving *Peace* or a separate work. But it must in any case have involved a thematic contrast between war and peace, including the association of the latter with the rural life of Attika (compare *Georgoi* above, *Nesoi* below): personified Farming was a character (fr. 305). There are only a handful of fragments; one contains a reference to triangular notice-boards on which military rosters were displayed in Athens (fr. 309).

fr. 305:

(Farming) Of Peace, so dear to all of human kind,  
     Her faithful nurse, her steward and helper and aide,  
     Her daughter, her sister—I was all these things to her.  
 (B) Then what’s your name? (F) You want my name? I’m Farming.

fr. 306:

Well take the shield  
 And use it at once as a lid on top of the well.

### *Heroes*

Named after its chorus (‘heroes’ in the sense of semi-divinized figures from the past). But we know nothing at all of the plot. Incidental details include references to a device like a neck-brace to prevent slaves from eating dough while kneading it (fr. 314), a bull-roarer for whirling round the head on a string (fr. 315), a hermaphroditic deity (fr. 325), and Dieitrephe (fr. 321), known to have been an Athenian military commander in the period 414–411 (cf. *B.* 800).

fr. 322 (sung by the chorus, probably as part of its parodos or entrance):

So for these reasons, men, take care  
 And worship us these heroes, since  
 We are the stewards of all things,  
 The sufferings and the good things too.  
 Our eyes are peeled for unjust people,  
 Like thieves and highway robbers:

These are the ones we cause diseases—  
 Enlargement of spleen and coughs and dropsy,  
 Catarrh and scabies and gout,  
 Insanity and ulcerous skin,  
 Swollen lymph nodes, shivers, fever  
 . . . —that's what we give to thieves.

*Thesmophoriazousai* (Women at the Thesmophoria) II

Probably later than the surviving play of the same name, this one was set on the third day (called Kalligeneia: cf. *WT* 300) of the women's Thesmophoria festival; Kalligeneia spoke the prologue (fr. 331). One fragment contains an extraordinarily detailed list (from, it seems, a disbelieving male speaker) of women's toiletries, clothes, cosmetics, and jewellery (fr. 332). There was at least one reference to Agathon (fr. 341), who actually appears at *WT* 101–265; but there is no reason to suppose the play had much to do with Euripides. The Thesmophoria as an interruption in marital relations is presumably the background to fr. 344. Frs. 347–8, in similar lyric metres, contain reflections on the earlier history of comedy which probably belong to the parabasis (for the reference to Krates in fr. 347, cf. *K.* 537–40). Also from the parabasis must have been fr. 346 (preserved only in an Arabic paraphrase of a work by Galen), where Aristophanes claimed, whether factually or fictionally, that he had been ill for four months (with a shivering cold and a fever).

fr. 334 (naming wine from various Greek islands; the last line is sexual):

I won't allow the drinking of Pramnian wine  
 Nor Chian nor Thasian nor wine from Peparethos,  
 Nor any other that will raise your battering-ram.

fr. 338 (cf. fr. 664, *WT* 139, 251, 638, though the Greek term here is different):

. . . she'd just undone the flap of her little dress  
 As well as the bands which held her tiny breasts.

fr. 341 (a reference to literary style that puns on effeminate lack of facial hair):

. . . and an antithesis that's shaved in Agathon's style

fr. 344:

I wish to mount my wife.

fr. 347 (where it is important that 'salt fish' was a cheap food in Athens):

Indeed the words and music of comedy's art provided a tasty dish  
 At the time when Krates regarded his salt fish 'ivory-textured'

And 'glistening bright' and 'effortlessly called to mind'  
 And had thousands of other such things to make his audience giggle.

fr. 348 (where the 'director' is probably also the playwright; cf. e.g. *A.* 628, *K.* 507):

... nor summon the Muses with their curling tresses  
 Nor call upon the Olympian Graces to join the dance:  
 They're with us already here, so says our director ...

### *Kokalos*

The play was staged near the end of Aristophanes' life (c. 388–85) in the name of his playwright son Araros, possibly at the Dionysia of 387 (when we know that Araros won first prize); cf. on *Aiolosikon* above. Ancient critics claimed that the plot, with 'rape, recognition (sc. of identity) and other elements', anticipated typical features of New Comedy; but we have no idea how. Kokalos was king of Kamikos (later Akragas) in Sicily, where Daidalos (see above on the play named after him) took refuge from Minos, who was subsequently killed by Kokalos' daughters. Aristophanes' plot possibly had a parodic relationship to Sophokles' *Kamikioi* (Men of Kamikos), though the latter may itself have been a satyr-play. The few surviving fragments are entirely miscellaneous: e.g. references to chilblains (fr. 359), old women drinking unmixed wine (fr. 364), someone vomiting after drinking unmixed wine (fr. 365), and Korinthian prostitutes (fr. 370, cf. *We.* 149).

### *Lemniai* (Lemnian Women)

A mythological burlesque, probably from the late fifth century and parodying parts of a set of myths used by several tragedians. The women of Lemnos, afflicted with a horrible odour by Aphrodite, were rejected by their husbands; in revenge, the women murdered all the men of the island—with the exception of Hypsipyle, who saved her father Thoas. The women subsequently became the lovers of the visiting Argonauts, Hypsipyle being Jason's mistress. Fr. 373 mentions Hypsipyle and the previous reign of Thoas, fr. 374 the women's killing of their husbands, and fr. 375 may refer to the arrival of the Argonauts. But we cannot reconstruct the plot as a whole.

fr. 375:

Every colonnade is swarming with foreign men.

fr. 382:

The women are fencing off their fannies.

fr. 383 (referring to a game like jacks and supposedly played especially by women):

<Playing> five-stones with broken bits of a pot.

*Nephelai* (Clouds) I

The surviving *Clouds*, as we are told by ancient scholars, is an extensively but incompletely revised version of the original play of 423: cf. my Introduction to the play. Three parts in particular were, we know, substantially changed by Aristophanes: the parabasis (which, in the surviving version, at 520–33, actually refers back to the ‘failed’ first performance), the agon between Moral and Immoral (where the contestants may have been presented as fighting-cocks in the first version), and the burning of Sokrates’ school in the final scene. Among a handful of small fragments of the original text of 423 are the following.

fr. 392 (referring to Sokrates; cf. n. on *F.* 1492):

The man who writes Euripides’ plays for him,  
Those loquacious, clever plays—well, *this* is the person!

fr. 393 (referring to Chairephon and/or others like him; see Index of Names):

They’ll lie like a pair of moths that are fucking each other.

*Nesoi* (Islands)

The title refers to the play’s chorus, which might have consisted of personified islands belonging to the Athenian empire (though other scenarios are possible). We know nothing at all about the plot: the idealized contrast between rural and urban life in fr. 402 does not point to a specific historical context (cf. on *Georgoi* and *Eirene* II above). This was one of four plays whose attribution to Aristophanes was questioned by some ancient scholars: see above on *Dionysos Shipwrecked*.

fr. 402 (compare *Georgoi*, fr. 111):

You fool, you fool, all these things are enjoyed when there’s peace.  
This man can live in the fields on his small plot of land,  
Quite free from all the troubles the Agora brings,  
And possessing his own trim pair of oxen as well.  
He can hear the calls of his flock of bleating sheep  
And the sound of new wine being filtered into a pot.  
For food he’ll enjoy small finches and thrushes too—  
No need to spend time in the Agora looking for fish  
That’s three days old, overpriced, and weighed for him  
By a seller who really cheats him by pressing the scales.

fr. 403 (with reference to the chorus’s entry via an *eisodos*; compare *C.* 323–7):

- (A) But what do you mean? Where exactly are they?  
(B) They’re here, coming through the entrance you see over there.

(?)*Odomantopresbeis* (Envoys to the Odomantians)

Highly dubious: both the title and the attribution to Aristophanes involve conjectural reconstructions of an entry in an inscription (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 2321.87–8) recording comic performances at the Lenaia of uncertain date. The Odomantians were a Thracian tribe; cf. *A.* 156–64.

*Holkades* (Merchant-Ships)

Probably belongs to the late-420s; Lenaia 423 is one possibility. Ancient evidence indicates that the play's themes involved war and peace. The title suggests a chorus of personified ships (cf. *K.* 1300–15 for the trope), which are generally assumed to have represented Athens' extensive trading activity (impeded by war). There was an encounter between an Athenian and a Spartan (fr. 415), who appear to have compared notes on the war.

fr. 415:

Well I never, Spartan! So both our sides, it's clear,  
Had lots of trouble of greasy and onerous kinds.

fr. 416 (describing a flatterer's exaggerated attentiveness—but to whom?  
Cf. *K.* 908):

He scratches that person's dandruff and always plucks  
His grey hairs from his beard.

fr. 422 (for Straton, cf. *A.* 122, *K.* 1374):

. . . beardless boys, Straton . . .

fr. 424 (for Euathlos, cf. *A.* 710, *W.* 592):

We too have a wretched archer who's state prosecutor  
The way that Euathlos is for you younger men.

*Pelargoi* (Storks)

References to the politician Neokleides (fr. 454, cf. *AW* 254, 398, *W.* 665, etc.) and to the rich miser Patrokles (fr. 455, cf. *W.* 84) suggest a date in the early fourth century. A tragic poet called Meletos was described as 'the son of Laios' with reference to his trilogy of plays on the Oedipus myth; he was possibly the same person as in fr. 156, but probably not as in fr. 117: the relation of all these figures to the Meletos who was prosecutor of Sokrates remains uncertain (cf. n. on *F.* 1302). The scanty fragments give no clues either to the plot or to the point of the title.

fr. 444 (for sympotic singing, cf. *A.* 979, *C.* 1364, *W.* 1225, 1238):

He held the myrtle branch to sing 'Admetos',  
But the other insisted on the 'Harmodios' song instead.

*Ploutos* (Wealth) I

This play was staged in 408, twenty years earlier than the surviving *Wealth*. We do not know whether the latter was a revision of the former or a completely new work: compare the cases of *Eirene* and *Nephelai* above.

fr. 459 (cf. *F.* 1093–8 for the scenario envisaged here):

... for those who find themselves coming last in the torch-race  
It's the cause of flat-handed slaps.

*Poiesis* (Poetry)

One of four plays whose attribution to Aristophanes was questioned by some ancient scholars: see above on *Dionysos Shipwrecked*. The title probably indicates that the play contained a female personification of poetry: one of only two surviving fragments refers to a group of people seeking all over Greece for a particular woman (fr. 466.3–4); a scenario in which Poetry had (symbolically) hidden herself away is a possibility.

fr. 467 (from a context comparing old and new musical styles; cf. the contest in *Frogs*):

... not the sort of early songs, monotonous seven-stringed pieces, they used to sing.

*Polyidos*

Polyidos was a Korinthian seer who, among other things, used magic to restore to life Glaukos, son of King Minos of Crete. We do not know what the play made of him, though fr. 469 shows a Cretan connection, since Phaidra was also daughter of Minos; whether coincidentally or not, the Athenian Theseum (temple of Theseus, later husband of Phaidra) was also mentioned (fr. 475, cf. fr. 577).

fr. 468 (the second line is identical to Sophokles, *Elektra* 1173):

To be afraid of death is a load of nonsense:  
All human beings are bound to suffer this fate.

fr. 469 (speaker and addressee uncertain):

So there, I give you this woman to be your wife,  
Phaidra here: I'm no doubt adding fuel to the fire.

*Proagon* (Preview)

Our best evidence is that *Proagon* was staged at Lenaia 422, the same festival as *Wasps*. This creates a puzzle about how one poet could have two plays staged in the same competition: the likeliest solution, but not certain, is that *Proagon* was produced in Philonides' name (and won first prize), with Aristophanes himself producing *Wasps* (which won second

prize). The proagon was a ceremony at which (only tragic?) dramatists and actors gave a preview of forthcoming plays at Athenian dramatic festivals: see Plato, *Symposium* 194b. We have no idea how this shaped the plot of Aristophanes' comedy, but we are told Euripides was a character and we know the work contained parodic treatment of the story of Thyestes (who unwittingly ate his own children); Euripides had handled this story in at least two tragedies (cf. *A.* 433).

fr. 477 (probably Thyestes speaking, after having eaten his own children):

O wretched me, what's churning up my stomach?  
Oh hell! Where on earth can I find a chamber-pot?

fr. 478 (Thyestes speaking: the second line is in lyric metre, for singing):

I tasted, o miserable me, a sausage of children.  
How then behold a roasted pig-snout?

### *Skenas Katalambanousai* (Women Pitching Tents)

The title refers to women claiming sites for temporary accommodation at a festival (cf. e.g. *WT* 624, 658); the women in question probably formed the chorus. There were individual female characters as well, one of whom called a wine-flask her 'fellow-festival-goer' (fr. 487). An ancient source claims that Aristophanes himself was a speaking character (fr. 488), though this has been doubted.

fr. 488 (Aristophanes himself describing his relationship to Euripides?):

I use the rounded style that belongs to his voice  
But the thoughts I compose are far less vulgar than his.

fr. 490 (possibly referring to a comedy by Strattis about Kallippides, a leading tragic actor known for his hyper-realistic style):

Just as in *Kallippides*  
I sit on the floor in the rubbish that's swept together.

fr. 494:

'The leopardess' is the name they give that strumpet.

### *Tagenistai* (Frying-Pan Men)

The play may have involved the utopian fantasy of a 'life' of feasting in the underworld (see fr. 504). All we know for sure is that there was an abundance of references to food and drink: several fragments suggest feasting that takes place on stage.

fr. 504 (for Plouton, see the Index of Names):

How on earth would Plouton ever have got his name  
If he hadn't acquired what's best? Here's one example



Of how the world below outdoes Zeus's realm.  
Whenever you weigh with scales, the heavier side  
Goes *downwards*, the empty side up to Zeus.

...

It would never have been the case  
That our heads wear garlands . . .  
When our corpses lie on the bier . . .  
If there weren't a drinking-party awaiting us there.  
That's the reason why the dead are called 'the blessed'.  
For everyone says 'The blessed man has left us',  
'He's fallen asleep', 'he's happy, he'll feel no pain'.  
And we sacrifice sacred offerings to the dead  
The way we do to the gods. We pour libations  
And ask them to send all good things up to us here.

fr. 506 (for Prodikos, cf. *C.* 361; for books, see n. on *F.* 1114):

This man's been corrupted: the cause is either a book  
Or Prodikos or some other blathering type.

fr. 513 (recitative; spoken perhaps by the chorus-leader?):

We've had a little too much to drink, my fellows, and eaten well.

fr. 514 (recitative):

This soup before us that's in the pots is hot and bubbling away.

fr. 515 (from a passage of recitative; for the names cf. e.g. *WT* 858, *F.* 293):

(A) And chthonic Hekate  
Entwined with coiling snakes.  
(B) . . . Why summon Empousa?

fr. 516 (in lyric metre; not necessarily literal: cf. *B.* 463–4):

Bring water for handwashing quickly, slave,  
And pass the towel around.

fr. 520 (in lyric metre):

Enough whitebait for me!  
I've been laid flat  
Scoffing things cooked in oil.  
Bring me instead some liver  
Or a young boar's  
Neck. Otherwise a rib or a tongue  
Or a spleen or intestine or an autumn pig's  
Womb—bring me this with bread-rolls  
That are warm.

### *Telemesses* (Telemessians)

The chorus were people from Tel(e)messus, a city in Lykia (SE Asia Minor)

which possessed an oracle of Apollo and belonged to the Delian League (in effect, the Athenian empire), at least in the mid-fifth century. We are practically clueless about the scenario. Sokrates' companion Chairephon (see Index of Names) was satirized as a *sukophantes*, a kind of blackmailer or malicious prosecutor (fr. 552). Aristyllos (cf. *AW* 647, *We.* 314) was also mentioned. The play is likely to belong to the second half of Aristophanes' career.

fr. 543 (possibly from the play's prologue):

We're not holding this contest in just the same old way  
That used to be done, but our business is novel . . .

fr. 545:

- (A) Bring us out a table  
That has three legs—it really mustn't have four.  
(B) But where on earth will I find a three-legged table?

### *Triphales* (Tri-Phallus?)

The title may involve wordplay on the name Phales, personification of the phallus (see *A.* 263–76); there was at least one mention of large penises and/or a priapic god (fr. 567). We do not know to whom the title referred; but his mother was either shown or described giving birth to him (fr. 562). The sons of Hippokrates were mocked: see above on *Georgoi*. In fr. 563 someone is afraid of the political power of Theramenes (cf. n. on *F.* 541). Other references include Iberian mercenaries (cf. Thucydides 6.90.3) and the city walls of Athens (fr. 569). There is no secure basis for the conjecture that the play had something to do with Alkibiades.

### *Phoinissai* (Phoenician Women)

The play probably stood in a parodic relationship to Euripides' *Phoinissai* (c.409), which deals with the fateful conflict between the two sons of Oedipus. Among the handful of fragments is a reference to a *theatropoles* (fr. 575), an entrepreneur who held a franchise from the city for selling theatre-tickets.

fr. 570 (possibly from the prologue; reminiscent of a tragic messenger-speech):

On Oedipus' pair of sons, the twofold boys,  
Ares crashed down: for single-combat's contest  
They now stand ready.

### *Horai* (Seasons)

The play apparently contained a 'trial' of foreign gods like Sabazios (fr. 578) and their expulsion from Athens. One long fragment (581) involves

an argument from an agon between representatives of old and new gods, though the identity of the speakers has been widely disputed. The chorus presumably represented the seasons of the year. The play may partly have thematized major changes brought about by the cosmopolitanism of Athenian culture in the later fifth century (cf. e.g. Thucydides 2.38.2 on Athens' import of goods from 'the whole world'). The butts of individual jokes in the play included Kallias (fr. 583, cf. fr. 117 above) and Chairephon, called 'child of night' (fr. 584; see the Index of Names).

fr. 577 (spoken perhaps by a foreign god as though a slave seeking 'sanctuary'; cf. *K.* 1312):

It's best for me to run to Theseus' shrine  
And stay there till we find a buyer for me.

fr. 578 (for Sabazios cf. *W.* 9–10, *B.* 873, *L.* 388):

... the Phrygian, the pipe-player, Sabazios ...

fr. 581 (it is uncertain whether A is a traditional or new god, e.g. Athena or Sabazios):

(A) You'll see that even in winter's depths cucumbers, grapes and fruit  
grow.

There'll be garlands of violets too. (B) More likely, a blinding cloud of  
dust.

(A) The same man's stall sells thrushes and pears and honeycombs, olives as  
well,

Beestings, stuffed tripe, swallows, cicadas, and animal embryo flesh.  
You'd see baskets of figs and myrtle-berries abounding everywhere.

(B) I assume that means they sow the seeds of pumpkins and turnips  
together,

So that nobody knows any longer precisely what time of year it is?

(A) Well doesn't it count as the greatest good if right the way through the  
year

A person can get anything he desires? (B) The greatest *evil*, you mean!  
If it just couldn't happen, they'd lack the desires. And they'd save their  
money as well.

I'd personally let them try these things for a while then take them away.

(A) But that's what I do with *other* cities—these things are only for Athens.  
And the reason they have this privileged state is because they worship  
the gods.

(B) You think, it seems, it's their reward for worshipping you. (A) Don't  
you?

(B) Their city's no longer Athens at all—you've turned it into Egypt!

### *Fragments Unattributed to Specific Plays*

I translate a very small selection of some striking items in this category.

fr. 591.84–6, 89–91 (one of several quotations embedded in a fragmentary ancient commentary on a lost play by Aristophanes; the goddess *may* be personified Poetry: cf. on *Gerytades* and *Poiesis* above):

Right, let me take this goddess I've brought back up  
To the Agora, and dedicate her with ox-sacrifice.  
Come, mistress, follow me here. It's noble for you  
To quickly heed my prayer.

fr. 592.15–30 (two female speakers; possibly from *Thesmophoriazousai* II. Cf. *L.* 108–10):

- (A) Well, what's to happen? (B) Look, answer me this question.  
What's the thing they say Milesian women employ  
To have some fun? I'm asking. The leather thing.  
(A) That's empty nonsense, outrageous to consider,  
And besides a cause of shame and a laughing-stock.  
To use this thing is the same as handling those eggs  
That are full of nothing but air, no chicks inside.  
It's exactly the same. Whenever your husband's away  
You resort to this, but it's just not worth the trouble.  
(B) And yet they say this thing resembles a willy,  
The real thing itself. (A) By Zeus, my dear, no more  
Than the moon resembles the sun. In colour perhaps  
There's some likeness to see—but the moon will never *heat* you!  
(B) You don't think it's worth it? (A) . . .  
(B) Look, suppose we share this business of ours with our slaves.  
What d'you think of that? In secret . . .

fr. 596 (for Kephisophon see n. on *F.* 943–4):

Kephisophon, you finest, swarthiest man,  
You lived for most of the time with Euripides  
And helped him compose, they say, his lyric songs.

fr. 656 (someone speaking about Euripides):

. . . (the tongue) with which he used to clean his . . . words.

fr. 664 (female speaker; cf. fr. 338 above):

. . . but with my breast-band undone  
My nuts fell out.

fr. 682:

. . . like a tangled fleece in his art, Euripides.

fr. 691 (lyric metre; describing an intellectual: cf. n. on *C.* 179):

. . . who ponders things out of sight  
But eats what's on the ground.

fr. 694 (recitative; referring to Euripides. For the idea, cf. esp. *WT* 167):

... the sorts of things he makes his characters say  
Are just what he's like himself.

fr. 696 (recitative metre; two separate passages: the first spoken by Aischylos, the second *to* him. The *Phrygians* was related to events in *Iliad*, book 24):

... I myself composed the dance-steps for my choruses.

I know this from watching your *Phrygians*,  
When they came to accompany Priam in ransoming his dead son  
And they made many moves like *this* and *this*, and *this* way, in their dances.

fr. 699:

You people mix our city like wine then sell it in cups to the poor.

fr. 706 (recitative metre):

... he has the city's middling style of speech,  
Not the somewhat effeminate urban type  
Nor the somewhat rustic and slavish kind.

fr. 719 (lyric metre; probably a parabasis song):

... a display of fancy language and witty jokes,  
All fresh from the bellows and freshly sculpted.

fr. 720:

... darkness since the death of Aischylos

fr. 732 (describing a young man unable to speak; for weasels, cf. n. on *WT* 559):

He's swallowed a weasel.

fr. 821 (attesting a unique verb; for the brain's hemispheres, cf. *F.* 134):

... to be half-brained ...

fr. 910:

... with make-up under her eyes ...

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

The Explanatory Notes are designed to provide concise guidance on historical and other details which might puzzle a modern reader. Fuller information about most points can be found in the Oxford commentaries cited in the Bibliography. The following abbreviations are occasionally used in the notes:

- DK      *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. H. Diels and W. Kranz, 6th edn. (Zurich, 1962)
- IEG      *Iambi et Elegi Graeci*, ed. M. L. West, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Oxford, 1989–92)
- OCD<sup>4</sup>    *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth, 4th edn. (Oxford, 2012)
- PMG      *Poetae Melici Graeci*, ed. D. L. Page (Oxford, 1962)

The fragments of comic and tragic poets are cited, respectively, from the following editions:

- Poetae Comici Graeci*, ed. R. Kassel and C. Austin (Berlin, 1984– )
- Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, ed. B. Snell *et al.* (Göttingen, 1971–2004)

Aristophanes' play titles are abbreviated as follows:

- A.      *Acharnians*
- AW     *Assembly-Women*
- B.      *Birds*
- C.      *Clouds*
- F.      *Frogs*
- K.      *Knights*
- L.      *Lysistrata*
- P.      *Peace*
- W.      *Wasps*
- We.     *Wealth*
- WT     *Women at the Thesmophoria*

## CLOUDS

- 7 *punish my slaves*: there was a higher risk during wartime that (ill-treated) slaves would desert to the enemy; cf. e.g. Thucydides 2.57.1.
- 14 *grow long*: long hair was associated with, among others, the young cavalrymen (n. on 120) of Athens; see K. 580 and cf. n. on 349–50.
- 15 *chariot-racing*: the chariot mentioned here is a two-horse vehicle (*sunoris*); there were races for these in e.g. the Panathenaia festival (see Index of

- 1372 *brother . . . sister*: in Euripides' *Aiolos* Makareus committed incest with his sister Kanake; both characters ended up committing suicide. Cf. *F.* 1081, 1475, *P.* 114–19, with my Appendix on Aristophanes' *Aiolosikon*.
- 1378 *cleverest*: see my Introduction to *Frogs*.
- 1415 *the children . . .*: a perverted echo of Euripides, *Alkestis* 691, which is quoted in its proper form at *WT* 194 (see n. there).
- 1435 *you in turn*: Strepsiades is apparently preparing to make the point that any son of Pheidippides, according to the latter's new law, will *also* be entitled to hit his own father.
- 1450 *criminals' pit*: the pit, just outside the city walls and under the control of a public official, into which the corpses of executed criminals were thrown; cf. *F.* 574. There is a memorable image of the place in Plato, *Republic* 4.439e–40a.
- 1468 *'paternal Zeus'*: Strepsiades quotes a phrase that probably comes from tragedy; 'paternal' might alternatively be translated 'ancestral', but the point here is the implication that Zeus will support the demands of a father.
- 1471 *'It's Swirl . . .'*: Pheidippides quotes back line 828 at his father.
- 1473 *this pot*: a large wine mixing-bowl called a *dinos* has stood throughout outside the door of Sokrates' school; cf. n. on 380. The term *dinos* allows puns in Greek on Zeus's name (in oblique cases starting *Di-*).
- 1478 *Hermes*: a herm, i.e. a symbolic (and probably priapic) statue of Hermes, stands outside Strepsiades' house door. Cf. the reference at *L.* 1094 to the notorious scandal of the mutilation of many Athenian herms in 415 (Thucydides 6.27–9).
- 1485 *Xanthias*: a common slave-name (lit. 'blonde-haired') in Aristophanes; cf. Dionysos's slave in *F.*
- 1498 *cloak*: see 497–505 with stage direction before 634; cf. 856.
- 1503 *'Air-walking . . .'*: Strepsiades quotes back line 225 at Sokrates; see the n. there.
- 1507 *backside*: the noun can denote the position of a heavenly body but one of its other meanings is that of a person's bottom; cf. *WT* 133.
- 1507–8 *exit running*: some modern scholars talk about Sokrates and his pupils being 'burned to death' inside the school; but the text clearly indicates that they escape from the building and are chased off stage. See my Introduction to the play.

#### WOMEN AT THE THESMOPHORIA

- 1 *swallow*: herald of spring in Greek folklore; but the Kinsman means the question metaphorically, i.e. when will his misery end?
- 14–18 *Aither . . . hearing*: for Aither, see Index of Names. Euripides offers a mishmash of speculative cosmogony and science of the kind associated with presocratic Greek thinkers.

- 56 *model*: the Servant's elaborate mix of technical metaphors for poetic composition here alludes to the *cire perdue* method of creating a wax model (with a clay covering), which is then heated away to create a mould for bronze statue-making.
- 68 *verses*: the Greek term *strophê*, which refers to matching sections of choral lyric (cf. the general Introduction, 'Formality and Performance'), literally means a 'turning' and therefore allows a pun here on bending poetic timbers. The reference to winter suits the dramatic setting at the time of the Thesmophoria (Oct.–Nov.), soon to be mentioned (80).
- 78–80 *courts . . . underway*: cf. n. on C. 620.
- 83 *Thesmophorion*: lit. 'the shrine of the Thesmophoroi' (i.e. Demeter and Persephone); the location is not certain but was probably on the N slope of the Akropolis.
- 85 *bad reputation*: for the (exaggerated) idea that Euripides specialized in depicting scandalous female characters, cf. *F.* 1043–54, *C.* 1371–2, *L.* 368–9.
- 94 *crafty scheming*: Euripides boasts of such a (supposed) trait of his work at *F.* 957.
- 98 *Kyrene*: a well-known courtesan; cf. *F.* 1327–8.
- 100 *anthill tunnels*: a metaphor for musically/poetically intricate structures of the kind the Kinsman takes to belong to a pretentiously 'modern' style and which are in a sense exemplified by the song that follows.
- 101 *chthonic goddesses*: Demeter and Persephone; 'chthonic' means 'belonging to the earth/underworld'.
- 102 *free*: the implied scenario may be that of Troy during the period when the Greeks (deceptively) appear to have sailed away and abandoned the war.
- 110 *Simoeis*: one of the two main rivers of Troy (e.g. Homer, *Iliad* 4.475, 5.774); for Phoibos, see Index of Names.
- 118–22 *Leto . . . Phrygian Graces*: Leto was mother of both Apollo and Artemis; the Graces (see Index of Names) are assimilated to the 'Asiatic' associations of her cult.
- 130 *gods of the female domain*: Genetyllides, deities (literally of childbirth) linked with Aphrodite and associated in comedy with female sensuality; the singular Genetyllis occurs at both *C.* 52 and *L.* 2.
- 135 *Lykourgeia*: a tetralogy (three tragedies plus satyr play); in the first play, *Edonians*, the Thracian king Lykourgos resisted the introduction of Dionysiac rites. The following lines contain an uncertain mixture of quotation and parody of a scene where Lykourgos questioned Dionysos himself about his exotic dress and appurtenances, which the king regarded as mixing effeminate and masculine features.
- 138–9 *saffron dress . . . breast-band*: saffron-dyed dresses were fine women's wear (cf. 253 with e.g. *C.* 51, *L.* 44–51, *AW* 332, 879) but could also be Dionysiac (*F.* 46, Kratinos fr. 40); a breast-band supported a woman's breasts like a modern brassiere (cf. 251–5, 638, frs. 338, 664).



- 142 *Lakonian shoes*: a standard type of male footwear in Athens; ‘Lakonian’ (lit. from the territory of Sparta) designates the style, not the source of the shoes.
- 153 *kinky sex*: lit. ‘you ride a horse’ (sexually, of a woman sitting on a man; cf. e.g. *W.* 501). Phaidra: see Index of Names.
- 156 *role-playing*: Greek *mimēsis*, a term which was starting to be used for artistic ‘representation’ and ‘expression’ in general. Agathon offers a version of a theory of poetic composition that combines creative imagination with quasi-theatrical role-playing: cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, ch. 17 for something similar.
- 157–8 *satyr-plays . . . erection*: satyrs (wild creatures with half-animal features) normally formed the chorus of satyr-plays written by tragedians; they were typically depicted in vase-painting as wildly oversexed.
- 161–3 *Ibykos . . . softness*: Agathon names three major 6th-century lyric poets; ‘Ionian’ refers here loosely to ideas of luxury and decadence (cf. *AW* 883, 918) which Greeks associated with Near Eastern influence.
- 164 *Phrynichos*: an early tragic poet (active c. 510–470); cf. *B.* 749, *F.* 910, 1299.
- 167 *nature*: a different theory from the one Agathon put forward at 149–56.
- 168–70 *ugly . . . plays*: Kinsman names three late 5th-century tragic poets. Philokles (cf. *B.* 281, 1295) was a nephew of Aischylos; for Xenokles, see Index of Names; Theognis is a target of jokes also at *A.* 10–12, 138–40.
- 177–8 *‘it’s the mark . . . words’*: Euripides quotes from one of his own plays, *Aiolos* (fr. 28); cf. n. on *C.* 1372.
- 194 *‘You’re happy . . .’*: Euripides, *Alkestis* 691, where Pheres refuses to die on behalf of his son Admetos; cf. the parodic form of the line at *C.* 1415.
- 198–9 *‘When disaster strikes . . .’*: Agathon quotes from one of his own plays (unknown), fr. 34.
- 222 *peg*: a reference to a technique used by butchers to force open a pig’s mouth for inspection; cf. *K.* 375–81.
- 224 *Awesome Goddesses*: the Semnai, whose cave shrine was near the Areopagos hill and sometimes served as a refuge for those fleeing persecution (cf. *K.* 1312, Thucydides 1.126.11).
- 232 *manliness*: the Greek involves a pun, ‘I shall serve in the army as *psilos*’, the latter adjective meaning either ‘smooth-shaven’ or ‘light-armed’.
- 235 *Kleisthenes*: see Index of Names. The joke will in a sense ‘come true’ at 574 ff.
- 237 *piglet*: slaughtered pigs had their bristles singed off before they were cooked; there may also be a sexual double entendre (‘piglet’ was slang for female genitalia: cf. 289, 537–40, with *A.* 764 ff.).
- 254 *By Aphrodite*: a type of oath especially used by women! Cf. *AW* 189–91.
- 272 *Aither*: see 14, 1068 and Index of Names. The line is based on Euripides fr. 487 (*Melanippe the Wise*); cf. *F.* 100.
- 273 *Hippokrates*: we do not know which individual is meant (cf. *C.* 1001 for one

such person), nor why his house (probably a kind of hostel with rented rooms) was good for a joke at this date.

- 275–6 *mind . . . tongue*: a partial, inverted quotation of the notorious line at Euripides, *Hippolytos* 612 ('My tongue has sworn but my mind is under no oath'); cf. *F.* 101–2, 1471, and for a later indication of the line's notoriety see Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.15, 1416a28–31.
- 278 *signal*: a signal of some sort was given for the start of the city's *ekklësia* or political Assembly (see Index of Names). The implication of the present line is that the women's Thesmophoria assembly (cf. 84) will be a female equivalent to the *ekklësia*; cf. nn. on 295–311, 335–8, 372–9.
- 279 *Thratta*: an ethnic name ('Thracian') used for some female slaves in Athens.
- 281 *hill*: the Akropolis; see n. on 83.
- 282 *Thesmophoroi*: Demeter and Persephone, patron deities of the festival; see my Introduction to the play.
- 287 *Pherrephatta*: the Attic form of 'Persephone' (Index of Names).
- 289 *Piglet*: see n. on 237.
- 291 *Willy*: a made-up name from the same slang term as used at 254 and 515; there may be parody of a mother's playful hypocorism for a small child.
- 295–311 *Let sacred silence . . . rejoice*: the Leader's proclamation, in prose, is partly reminiscent of the herald's announcement at the start of a meeting of the city's Assembly; cf. n. on 278. Ploutos ('wealth') was the son of Demeter. Kalligeneia (perhaps Demeter's nurse), lit. 'fair birth', gave her name to one of the days of the Thesmophoria; cf. fr. 331 from *WT* II (Appendix). Kouroutrophos ('child-rearer') is a deity identified in later periods with Earth. 'Paion' is here an exclamatory prayer for good fortune. For Hermes and the Graces, see Index of Names.
- 319 *come here*: in Greek prayers, deities are standardly invited to come in person to their worshippers; cf. n. on *C.* 270–4. The gods mentioned after Zeus are Apollo and Athena (see Index of Names).
- 321 *Offspring*: Artemis (see Index of Names); for Leto, cf. 118–29.
- 327 *phorminx*: a large traditional lyre; cf. *F.* 231.
- 332–4 *Pythian . . . Delian*: see Index of Names under Delphi and Delos.
- 335–8 *plots . . . tyrant*: a (distorted) version of the curses delivered as part of the preliminaries of an Assembly meeting. 'Medes' was synonymous for Greeks with 'Persians', though the two peoples were originally distinct; on this passage and 365, see my Introduction to the play.
- 340–1 *surrogate baby . . . go-between*: the Leader's curses switch abruptly from political to sexual matters. The surrogate baby is envisaged either where a woman herself has not given birth (cf. 407–8) or where one child is swapped for another (see 564–5). For a slave go-between in an adulterous affair, see the legal case described in a speech of the Athenian orator Lysias (Lysias 1.19–20); cf. n. on *F.* 1079–82.

- 365 *Medes*: see n. on 335–8.
- 372–9 *decision . . . motion*: the formalities again follow those of the city's Assembly; cf. n. on 278. For the invitation to speak cf. *A.* 45, *AW* 130 (the latter in the women's *rehearsal* for the Assembly).
- 383 *smear . . . pretension*: the oath by Demeter and Persephone is distinctively female: cf. 594, 875, 916, *L.* 112, *AW* 155. But the woman's denial of self-interested motivation is a motif used by male orators in the city's politics.
- 387 *vegetable-seller*: a standing comic gibe at Euripides (possibly a satirical distortion of some kind of commercial activity on the part of his family); cf. 456, 910, *F.* 840, and e.g. *A.* 478.
- 390–1 *wherever . . . choruses*: i.e. every time a play by Euripides is performed; this could include stagings in local deme theatres as well as at the major city festivals (see n. 68 to the general Introduction).
- 392–3 *adultery . . . tongues*: ideas which chiefly belong to a *comic* stereotype of women; relevant to Euripides only in so far as he (but not alone among tragedians) sometimes depicted women with strongly erotic character and/or a capacity for boldly independent decision-making. Cf. my Introduction to the play.
- 395 *when they return*: the passage is often taken to indicate that most Athenian women did not normally attend the theatre in Athens; cf. *B.* 793–6 with n. 32 to the general Introduction. At this date, most seating in the Theatre of Dionysos consisted of wooden benches: see general Introduction, 'Stage Directions'.
- 401 *garland*: taken (on the husband's suspicion) to be some sort of dedicatory offering for a secret lover.
- 404 *Korinthian guest*: in Euripides' *Stheneboia* (cf. *F.* 1043–9) the heroine of that name was illicitly in love with the Korinthian guest Bellerophon (Index of Names); among other things, she even (superstitiously) 'dedicated' fallen/dropped objects to him.
- 407–9 *pregnant . . . birth*: see the idea of surrogate 'births' at 339–40; compare the scenario at Herodotos 5.41.
- 413 *'If . . . ruler'*: Euripides fr. 804.3 (*Phoinix*).
- 414 *women's quarters*: it was a standard practice for Athenian houses to be internally divided into male/female quarters, though exactly what this amounted to in practice would vary; cf. e.g. Lysias 1.9.3, Xenophon, *Oikonomikos* 9.5–6. The (clay) 'seals' in 415 are put on storeroom doors: see 424–8.
- 423 *Lakonian keys*: evidently an elaborate kind; cf. n. on 142.
- 430 *poison*: ironically this is itself an idea found in Euripidean tragedy; see esp. *Medea* 384–5. Cf. line 561.
- 432 *decree . . . scribe*: apart from the gender of the scribe (cf. 374), Mika talks like a male speaker proposing a decree in the city's Assembly.

- 433 *Strophe*: unusually, the matching antistrophe (see general Introduction, ‘Formality and Performance’) is not the next choral song (459 ff.) but the one after that (520 ff.).
- 440 *Xenokles*: see Index of Names; for Karkinos, cf. n. on C. 1261.
- 446 *Kypros*: we do not know of any Athenian actions on the island (under Persian control at this time) for several decades before this; there may or may not be a joke lurking here.
- 451 *gods*: the most extreme statement of atheism by a Euripidean character is Bellerophon’s in fr. 286; passages such as *Hercules Furens* 1341–6 are somewhat less radical. Compare Sokrates at C. 247 ff.
- 456 *vegetable plots*: see n. on 387.
- 461–3 *verbiage . . . convincing*: a characteristic example of Aristophanic ‘discontinuity’ of characterization.
- 466 *Let me start*: various parts of the Kinsman’s speech echo the defence speech of the disguised Telephos (see Index of Names and my Introduction to *WT*) in Euripides’ play.
- 481 *scratched*: cf. *AW* 36 for scratching on a door as a prearranged signal.
- 486 *juniper*: juniper berries; the three ingredients are for a potion to settle an upset stomach.
- 489 *laurel*: sacred to Apollo; a pillar dedicated to the god stood outside some house doors (see n. on 748 and cf. *W.* 875).
- 495 *guarding the walls*: sentry duty on the city’s walls was urgent at this date; see Thucydides 8.69.1.
- 499–501 *wife . . . house*: the scenario is taken from folktale, not ordinary reality—one of several symptoms of the Kinsman’s absurd naivety.
- 504 *to help with the birth*: both drugs and amulets were sometimes used for this purpose.
- 518–19 *rage . . . we’ve done*: based on lines from Telephos’s defence speech in Euripides’ play (fr. 711).
- 520 *Antistrophe*: see n. on 433.
- 530 *orator*: this replaces ‘scorpion’ in the proverb referred to. Some scholars see here an allusion to current events in Athenian politics: see my Introduction to the play.
- 533 *Aglauros*: one of the daughters of the mythical Athenian king Kekrops (see C. 301); she committed suicide and had a shrine dedicated to her on the eastern slope of the Akropolis.
- 537 *ashes*: compare the violent genital depilation of an adulterer at C. 1083. Women sometimes used a lamp to singe off pubic hair (see *AW* 12–13, *L.* 828); Euripides’ earlier treatment of his Kinsman at 215, 230 ff. was modelled on that practice. ‘Pussy’ in the next line is literally ‘piglet’; cf. n. on 237.
- 547 *Melanippes . . . Phaidras*: Euripides wrote two plays about Melanippe, who

- bore twins (after either rape or seduction) to the god Poseidon, and two about Phaidra (see Index of Names). The contrast with Odysseus's faithful wife is comically naive.
- 556 *scraper*: i.e. a 'strigil', a device with which athletes scraped olive oil (as a cleaning agent) off the body; the Kinsman probably envisages a type made of a hollow reed.
- 558–9 *meat . . . weasel*: the suggestion is that women bribe procuresses with meat left over from the Apatouria (a three-day festival which included a ritual, with animal sacrifice, for the admission of new members to the kinship group or phratry; cf. nn. on *F.* 417, 798) then tell their husbands it was taken by a weasel (kept as a vermin-killing house pet: cf. e.g. *W.* 363, *P.* 794).
- 561 *poison*: cf. n. on 430.
- 562–3 *Acharnian . . . bathtub*: Acharnai was one of the northernmost demes (n. on *C.* 134) of Attika; cf. *L.* 62 and the chorus of Aristophanes' *Acharnians*. The circumstantial details of these lines make one wonder whether there is reference to an actual sensational crime.
- 564–5 *boy . . . daughter*: economic reasons might lead to the preference for a boy over a girl; cf. n. on 340.
- 566 *two goddesses*: Demeter and Persephone; see nn. on 282, 383.
- 570 *gobbling*: the women were supposed to be fasting on this day of the Thesmophoria; cf. my Introduction to the play.
- 576 *spokesman*: Kleisthenes absurdly purports to be a *proxenos* (normally someone who semi-officially looked after another city's interests in his own city; cf. *B.* 1021) for the women.
- 586 *end . . . deed*: parts of the exchange between chorus-leader and Kleisthenes parody some of the stylized dialogue conventions of tragedy.
- 594 *goddesses two*: the Kinsman tries to use a typical female oath; cf. n. on 383.
- 602 *spokesman*: see n. on 576.
- 605 *Kleonymos*: see Index of Names. For the practice of publicly identifying women by the names of male relatives, see 619, 840–1, with n. on *C.* 46–7.
- 620 *Kothokidai*: a small, remote deme (n. on *C.* 134) in NW Attika.
- 624 *tent*: the women lived in a tented village on the Akropolis for the duration of the Thesmophoria.
- 638 *breast-band*: see n. on 138–9.
- 639 *she*: Mika incongruously continues to refer to the Kinsman as though he were a woman.
- 647–8 *isthmus . . . Korinth*: see Index of Names, s.v. Korinth.
- 654 *Prytaneis*: see Index of Names.
- 658 *Pnyx . . . tents*: the Pnyx was the hill west of the Akropolis where the Athenian Assembly met; the women are notionally on the Akropolis itself (83, 281) but in keeping with their Assembly-like procedures (nn. on 278,

- 295–311, 335–8, etc.) speak momentarily as though they were on the Phyx. For tents, see n. on 624.
- 672 *the gods*: the chorus talk as though an infiltrator of their rituals would by definition be a non-believer in the traditional gods; cf. Kritylla's view of Euripides at 450–1.
- 690 *baby*: the Kinsman's seizure of the 'baby' (see 733) activates paratragedy based on Euripides' *Telephos*; cf. my Introduction to the play, with the Index of Names, s.v. *Telephos*.
- 697 *trophy*: normally erected on the battlefield by an already victorious army; here comically proleptic—or perhaps we are meant simply to infer that Mika is ignorant of military matters.
- 700 *Fates*: the Moirai, goddesses responsible for determining the length and other inescapable elements of each human life; see *B.* 1734, *F.* 453, with e.g. Hesiod, *Theogony* 217, 904.
- 727 *set him on fire*: for such comically extreme behaviour, cf. the male chorus's intentions at *L.* 269–70, as well as the form of Strepsiades' revenge at the end of *Clouds*.
- 734 *Persian booties*: two of the tied ends of the wineskin have been fitted with miniature slippers (cf. *C.* 151), as seen in the illustration of the scene on an Apulian 4th-century vase cited in n. 91 to the general Introduction.
- 738 *No wonder*: i.e. because they are drunk.
- 741 *nine*: the Greek says 'ten', but that is a kind of inclusive counting.
- 746 *vintage*: the Greek refers to the Choes ('Wine-jugs') festival; cf. *A.* 1000–2. The Kinsman puns on counting a baby's years and the age of a wine.
- 747 *Dionysiac*: Athens had several Dionysia, festivals of Dionysos; all that matters is the allusion to Dionysos as god of wine.
- 748 *right here*: the Kinsman gestures towards a statue of Apollo outside the stage building; cf. n. on 489.
- 758 *perk*: a priest(ess) would often be allowed to keep part of a sacrificial animal.
- 770–1 *Palamedes . . . oars*: a scene from Euripides' play *Palamedes* (see Index of Names), staged in 415; was there an ironic reference to Palamedes as himself the mythic inventor of writing?
- 773 *tablets*: wooden votive dedications lying on or near the altar.
- 781 *rho*: i.e. 'r'; one might imagine the Kinsman as having reached the third letter of Euripides' name.
- 785 *Step forward*: the Greek verb here is the one from which the term 'parabasis' derives; cf. *P.* 735 and see the general Introduction, 'Formality and Performance'. The present parabasis is in truncated form; it lacks songs and has only a single 'epirrhematic' section (contrast e.g. *C.* 510–626 for the full form).
- 790 *forbid . . . doors*: this presupposes a social protocol subscribed to (though

- not necessarily upheld in all respects) by ‘respectable’ (and in practice wealthier) Athenian families, whereby women led much of their lives indoors and did not move freely in public; cf. e.g. *L.* 16, *AW* 335–41.
- 795 *visit* . . . *dancing*: women did socialize in this way, sometimes for festivals like the Adonia (*L.* 389–96); cf. *AW* 348–9, *L.* 700–1 (with a special twist).
- 797–9 *peek* . . . *peeking*: prostitutes might lurk alluringly in this way (cf. *AW* 924–5); but the passage interestingly hints at the sexual charge that might be generated even by such rare glimpses of ‘respectable’ women (cf. n. on 790). Compare *P.* 979–85.
- 804 *Nausimache* . . . *Charminos*: Nausimache means ‘naval battle’; Charminos was a general who had suffered a recent naval defeat to the Spartans (Thucydides 8.41–3).
- 805 *Salabaccho*: a prostitute whose name occurs also at *K.* 765; Kleophon was a radical politician associated with an aggressive stance on the war (see n. on *F.* 678).
- 806–7 *Aristomache* . . . *Stratonike*: the first means ‘best fighter’, the second ‘army victory’. Aristomache is called ‘Marathonian’ simply because the famous victory over the Persians at Marathon (Index of Names) was indeed remembered as the Athenians’ ‘best’. The logic, militarily speaking, is of course absurd.
- 808–9 *Euboule* . . . *somebody else*: Euboule means ‘good council/counsel’; in 413–12 the Athenians had partly curbed the powers of the Council (see Index of Names) by the temporary appointment of a group of ten (later thirty) *Probouloi*, ‘Commissioners’ (see *L.* 387 with Thucydides 8.1.3).
- 811–13 *No woman* . . . *same day*: the Leader contrasts major misappropriation of public funds by a male politician (actual or generic is unclear), then pictured as hypocritically taking part in the Panathenaic procession (see n. on *C.* 69), with the petty domestic filching supposedly (i.e. comically) typical of Athenian wives.
- 823 *parasols*: in origin a Greek borrowing from the Near East; rarely used by Greek men, hence the piquancy of Prometheus’s parasol at *B.* 1494–1551. For the idea of women as naturally conservative in habits, compare *AW* 221–8.
- 827–9 *thrown* . . . *parasol*: the women give an absurd twist to the idea of cowardly soldiers throwing away their shields in order to flee from battle.
- 834–5 *Stenia* . . . *our own*: the Stenia (just before the Thesmophoria) and Skira (cf. *AW* 18, 59) were examples of festivals exclusive to women.
- 838 *cropped close*: the reference is to a rounded hairstyle suitable only for a slave; cf. *A.* 849, *B.* 806.
- 845 *loans* . . . *loins*: the Greek puns on a noun (*tokos*) which can mean both interest on a loan and offspring; for Hyperbolos and Lamachos, see Index of Names.
- 850 *recent*: staged in the previous year (412).

- 855–7 *Lo . . . dwell*: these lines borrow Euripides, *Helen* 1–2, plus a line that starts from *Helen* 3 but then veers away from its model (and refers incongruously to an Egyptian fondness for purges: cf. *P.* 1253–4). The main correspondences to *Helen* in what follows (in some cases only parts of lines, and with some differences of detail) are: *WT* 859–60 ~ *Helen* 16–17, *WT* 862 ~ *Helen* 22, *WT* 864–5 ~ *Helen* 52–3, *WT* 866 ~ *Helen* 49, *WT* 868 ~ *Helen* 56, *WT* 871 ~ *Helen* 68, *WT* 874 ~ *Helen* 460, *WT* 878 ~ *Helen* 461, *WT* 881: cf. *Helen* 467, *WT* 886 ~ *Helen* 466, *WT* 905 ~ *Helen* 72 + 557, *WT* 906 ~ *Helen* 558, *WT* 907–12 ~ *Helen* 561–6.
- 858 *Hekate*: see Index of Names.
- 860 *Tyndareos*: King of Sparta, notional human ‘father’ of Helen, though Zeus himself had seduced her mother, Leda.
- 861 *Phrymondas*: a proverbial malefactor.
- 864 *Skamander*: one of the rivers of Troy; cf. *F.* 928.
- 868 *ravens aren’t hungry*: lit. ‘because of the poor quality of the ravens’ (sc. in failing to eat you). Compare the curse ‘To the crows/ravens’ at line 1079, with n. on *C.* 789.
- 870 *deceive me not*: the first half of the line is actually based not on Euripides but on Sophokles fr. 493 (*Peleus*).
- 874–6 *Proteus . . . Proteas*: Proteus was an Egyptian king with whom, on the version followed in Euripides’ *Helen* (line 4; cf. Herodotos 2.112–20), Helen resided for the duration of the Trojan War. Kritylla, using a female oath (cf. n. on 383), confuses him with a contemporary Athenian (the name is found as that of a general at Thucydides 1.45.2).
- 880 *Thesmophorion*: see n. on 83.
- 894 *to steal*: Kritylla makes a common-sense but mistaken assumption about why a man has infiltrated a women’s festival.
- 897 *Theonoe*: in Euripides’ *Helen* a priestess who gives Helen advice and assistance; ‘crone’ (896) rather suggests the abusive doorkeeper at *Helen* 437 ff. (whose words the Kinsman himself had adapted at 874, 886).
- 898 *Kritylla*: after her own name she identifies herself, as is the norm for respectable women in public (see n. on 605), by her husband and his deme (cf. e.g. *C.* 134).
- 902 *What did you say?*: what follows is based on the recognition scene between Helen and Menelaos at Euripides, *Helen* 526–96 (cf. n. on 855–7).
- 903 *cheeks*: the Kinsman alludes, with absurd incongruity, to his earlier shaving (221 ff.).
- 919 *Tyndareos*: cf. n. on 860.
- 931 *plank*: the reference is to a brutal form of imprisonment/torture (and sometimes execution) in which five metal clamps (1003) fastened a person’s neck, arms, and legs to a wooden board. Cf. n. on *C.* 591–2.
- 935 *Egyptian sailor*: Kritylla says ‘a sail-stitcher’, probably an allusion to



- Egyptian linen production and/or the rags in which Euripides is costumed.
- 949 *Pauson* . . . *fast*: Pauson is also mocked for poverty/hunger at *We.* 602 and as a parasite at *A.* 854; he may be the caricaturist painter of e.g. Aristotle, *Poetics* 2.1448a6. Here his hunger is satirically assimilated to the ritual fasting on this day of the Thesmophoria (Index of Names).
- 962 *slander*: a reference to the traditional expectation of satirical songs from a comic chorus. Is the passage an allusion to avoidance of political topicality at a time of dangerous political developments in Athens? See my Introduction to the play.
- 972 *victory*: the Chorus speaks momentarily in its theatrical rather than dramatic persona.
- 973–6 *Hera* . . . *marriage*: Hera, consort of Zeus, was traditionally a goddess of marriage.
- 988 *Bacchic god*: Dionysos (see Index of Names); the following part of the song celebrates him.
- 990–1 *Euios* . . . *Bromios*: two cult titles of Dionysos, the former derived from ritual exclamations ('euoi', 994); both are used frequently in e.g. Euripides' *Bacchae*.
- 996 *Kithaironian*: Mt Kithairon, near Thebes (birthplace of Dionysos).
- 1001 *'Ere den* . . . : for the Archer's 'pidgin' Greek, see the general Introduction, 'Translating Aristophanes'.
- 1012 *Andromeda*: daughter of Kepheus, king of the Ethiopians; she was tied to a rock by her father as propitiatory sacrifice to a sea-monster (sent by Poseidon to punish the family), but was rescued by the hero Perseus, returning from killing and decapitating the Gorgon Medusa (cf. 1102). Euripides' play on the theme was produced the previous year, 412 (at the same festival as *Helen*: n. on 855–7); see n. on 1015 with my Introduction to *WT*.
- 1015 *Dear maidens*: this opening is taken directly from the heroine's song to the chorus in Euripides' *Andromeda* (fr. 117). The precise extent of other borrowings from the play, obviously diluted by various comic incongruities, is uncertain; but the following quotations/adaptations are reasonably secure: *WT* 1018–19 ~ fr. 118, *WT* 1021–2 ~ fr. 120, *WT* 1029–39 ~ fr. 122, *WT* 1065–9 ~ fr. 114, *WT* 1070–2 ~ fr. 115, *WT* 1098–1100 ~ fr. 124.1–3, *WT* 1101–2 ~ fr. 123/124.5–6(?), *WT* 1105–6 ~ fr. 125.1–2.
- 1018 *you who sing*: i.e. Echo, who repeated parts of Andromeda's lament from a cave in Euripides' play.
- 1033 *Glauketes*: the name of a contemporary satirized at *P.* 1008 as a glutton.
- 1044 *saffron*: see n. on 138–9.
- 1061 *role*: a particularly ironic case of 'metatheatre'; see my Introduction to the play.

- 1069 *Olympos*: the name here connotes not just the mountain (Index of Names) but the whole sky.
- 1103 *Gorgos* . . . *scribe*: Gorgos was evidently secretary (n. on 372–9) to the Council at this time or in the recent past but is not otherwise known.
- 1130 *Bringing words* . . . : the line is a quotation from Euripides, *Medea* 298.
- 1142 *holder of the keys*: the reason for the term is not clear but the keys imagined may be those to the treasury in the Parthenon; for Pallas as a cult title of Athena, see Index of Names.
- 1149 *mistress deities*: Demeter and Persephone; see nn. on 83, 282.
- 1158 *Come now* . . . : cf. n. on 319.
- 1168–9 *denounce* . . . *secret*: Euripides alludes to the same male stereotype of women's behaviour used previously by the Kinsman in his speech at 466–519; for the assumption that most Athenian males are away on military campaigns, cf. *L.* 99–104.
- 1195 *drachma*: probably a high price for a prostitute's services; cf. nn. on *C.* 21, 118, *F.* 173.
- 1200 *Artemisia*: the best-known holder of this name was the queen of Halikarnassos who accompanied the Persian Xerxes on his invasion of Greece in 480; cf. *L.* 675, with Herodotos 7.99, etc. But it here serves as an amusingly pretentious name for a disreputable bawd of the kind Euripides impersonates.
- 1230 *Thesmophoroi*: see n. on 282.

## FROGS

- 3 *hard-pressed*: i.e. by carrying a heavy load; Dionysos warns Xanthias off clichéd jokes about the physical labour of slaves. Cf. an ironic joke on the same Greek verb by the jester at Xenophon, *Symposium* 1.11.
- 13–14 *Phrynichos* . . . *Ameipsias*: three contemporary comic poets, the first and third both well established and successful; Phrynichos (cf. n. on *C.* 553–7) was actually competing against *Frogs* at this same festival with a play called *Muses*.
- 18 *a year*: a kind of temporal pun, since the major dramatic festivals were annual.
- 33 *sea-fight*: the battle of Arginousai in summer 406 (an Athenian victory but with heavy losses of men; cf. n. on 541), after which slaves who had fought for the city were given freedom and citizenship (cf. 190–1, 693–4).
- 38 *Centaur*: see Index of Names.
- 46 *saffron dress*: see n. on *WT* 138–9.
- 47 *boots*: high boots of a kind worn mostly by women (the same sort at *L.* 657, *AW* 346) but sometimes forming part of an 'effeminate' Dionysiac costume; cf. 557. The whole line resembles *WT* 136–40 and may echo the same Aischylean text as there (n. on *WT* 135).

## INDEX OF NAMES

Listed here are those proper names (excluding the purely fictional) of people, places, and institutions that are not glossed in the Explanatory Notes. References are selective; fragments of Aristophanes cited here are mentioned in the Appendix. Capitals within entries indicate cross-references. For abbreviations of play-titles see p. 255.

- AGATHON (c. 445–c. 400), Athenian tragic poet; treated as effeminate in person (*WT* 29–35, 191–2) and, somewhat like EURIPIDES (cf. *WT* 187), stylistically ‘modern’ in his work, with mannered lyrics (*WT* 101–29) and some rhetorical features (fr. 341); he eventually left Athens for (and died at) the Makedonian court (*F.* 83–5)
- AGORA, civic centre of Athens, a general social meeting-place (*C.* 991, 1003, *WT* 578) but also containing courts, other official buildings, temples, and shops (*F.* 1350, *WT* 457)
- AISCHYLOS (c. 525–456), the greatest of early Athenian tragic poets, but found difficult and old-fashioned by some in the later fifth century (*C.* 1365–7); his plays were associated with values of poetic grandeur, military heroism, elaborate choral lyrics, and portentous atmosphere (*F.* 814–1533 *passim*)
- AITHER, traditional poetic term (a quasi-divinity at Hesiod, *Theogony* 124) for the upper regions of the air (*C.* 285, *WT* 43), semi-deified by Sokrates and the Clouds (*C.* 265, 570) and by Euripides (*WT* 272, *F.* 100), who also speaks of it as a cosmogonic force (*WT* 14)
- AKROPOLIS, limestone citadel, the original location of settlement at Athens, and in the classical period its major religious centre, particularly sacred to ATHENA (*C.* 602), site of Parthenon and other temples/shrines, including the Thesmophorion (*WT* 83, 281), and final destination of the PANATHE-NAIA procession (*C.* 69, *WT* 812)
- APOLLO, son of Leto (*WT* 129), born on DELOS, brother of ARTEMIS, god of music/song (*WT* 111–12, 969, *F.* 231–2) and prophecy (*F.* 1184), with major oracle at Delphi; sometimes titled PHOIBOS (*WT* 109–12)
- ARTEMIS, virgin goddess of hunting and wild animals (*WT* 114–19, 971), daughter of ZEUS and Leto (*F.* 321), twin-sister of APOLLO; women swear oaths by her (e.g. *WT* 517, 569, 742); sometimes associated with bees (*F.* 1273)
- ASSEMBLY (*ekklêsia*), the sovereign citizen body of the Athenian democracy; it met several times a month on the Pnyx (*WT* 658) and proposals were put to it, before being voted on, by individual speakers (*C.* 432–3, 1019); the women’s assembly in *WT* is in part parodic of its procedures
- ATHENA, daughter of ZEUS, patron-goddess of Athens, a virgin (*WT* 317, 1139), worshipped especially on the AKROPOLIS and typically depicted

as a warrior (*WT* 318); her cult titles included PALLAS, her traditional epithets 'grey-eyed' (*WT* 318), and her festivals the PANATHENAIA ATTIKA (adj. Attic), the entire geographical territory of the Athenian polis, comprising both the city proper and the territory of the demes (*C.* 209–10); its characteristic products included honey (*WT* 1192), and Athenians could think of themselves wryly as having distinctively 'Attic' qualities (*C.* 1176)

BELLEROPHON, hero from KORINTH, who escaped death after Stheneboia (*F.* 1043, 1049) fell in love with him then falsely accused him to her husband Proitos, whose guest Bellerophon was (*WT* 404; cf. the related story at Homer, *Iliad* 6.155 ff.); in Euripides' *Stheneboia*, Bellerophon later killed her by throwing her from the winged horse Pegasos, from which he fell himself and was mortally wounded in Euripides' *Bellerophon* (n. on *F.* 846)

CENTAURS, mythological tribe, half-man and half-horse in form, notorious for their wild, violent behaviour (*C.* 346, 350); HERAKLES fought against them (cf. *F.* 38, with Appendix on *Dramas* I)

CHAIREPHON, lifelong associate of SOKRATES (*C.* 104, 144, 156 etc.), reputed to have a sickly appearance (*C.* 503); cf. frs. 295, 393, 552, 584

COUNCIL (*boulê*), of 500, responsible for day-to-day administration of Athenian democracy (*WT* 79, 943), including preparation of ASSEMBLY agendas (*WT* 372, parodic); temporarily suspended in 412 (*WT* 808–9); the PRYTANEIS were its standing committee

DELOS, Aegean island, associated with the birth and cult of APOLLO (*C.* 596, *WT* 316, *F.* 659)

DEMETER, daughter of ZEUS and mother of PERSEPHONE, goddess of corn and fertility whose cults included the Eleusinian MYSTERIES (*F.* 383 ff., 886–7) and THESMOPHORIA (*WT* 286 ff.)

DIONYSOS, son of ZEUS and Semele (*WT* 990–1); god of wine (*WT* 747, *F.* 22) and ecstatic revels (*C.* 606, *F.* 1211–13), including comedy itself (*C.* 519, *F.* 357, 368); associated with Mount Nysa (*F.* 215); also called 'Bacchic' (*WT* 987, *F.* 1259), his followers bacchants (*C.* 605); patron god of Athens' dramatic festivals, including the springtime City Dionysia (*C.* 311)

ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES, see s.v. MYSTERIES

EURIPIDES (c. 485–406), the youngest (after AISCHYLOS and SOPHOKLES) of the trio of Athens' most famous tragedians; his work became associated with rhetorical style (e.g. *F.* 775), realistic psychology (*F.* 959–60), erotic subject-matter (*C.* 1371–2), including female characters like PHAIDRA (hence supposed misogyny, *WT passim*), and new intellectual ideas (*F.* 814–1533 *passim*)

GRACES, a trio of divine females, often associated with the MUSES (cf. e.g. Hesiod, *Theogony* 60–4), personifications of beauty, charm, sophistication in music and other activities (*C.* 773, *WT* 122, 301, *F.* 333, fr. 348)

HADES, the underworld (*F.* 69, 118, 172, etc.), ruled by PLOUTON

- HEKATE, a deity associated with the underworld, magic and monstrous apparitions (fr. 515); sometimes depicted as a torch-carrying figure (*WT* 858, 1362), she had various shrines in Athens (*F.* 366)
- HERAKLES, son of ZEUS and Alkmene (*F.* 531, 582), 'masculine' hero par excellence (*C.* 1050–2, *F.* 464), usually recognizable by his lion-skin and club (*F.* 46–7, etc.); his famous 'labours' included descent to the underworld to capture the fearsome dog Kerberos (*F.* 108–11, 467–9), but his comic persona is associated with gluttony (*F.* 62–5, 107, 549 ff.); he became a god after his death (*F.* 593)
- HERMES, traditionally a messenger-god, whose various associations included the underworld (*F.* 1126–48), guile (*WT* 1202), and pastoral matters (*WT* 977); often represented by a statue ('herm') outside the doors of Athenian houses (*C.* 1478 ff.)
- HOMER, traditional name for the creator of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; the poems could be invoked as repositories of heroic values and general wisdom (*C.* 1056–7, *F.* 1034–41)
- HYPERBOLOS, prominent politician from the late 420s, ostracised c.416 and later murdered (Thucydides 8.73.3); for some a crude 'demagogue' (*C.* 876, cf. *F.* 570), of 'vulgar' origin (*C.* 1065), and corrupt (*C.* 1065–6); held various offices (*C.* 623–6); together with his mother (*C.* 552, *WT* 840) a frequent target of comic poets (*C.* 551–8)
- KINESIAS, a dithyrambic poet and chorus-trainer (*F.* 153, 1437, cf. *B.* 1372 ff.), mocked for both cultural and personal features (fr. 156), including an episode of supposedly scandalous behaviour in a temple (*F.* 366)
- KLEISTHENES, a late fifth-century Athenian of some social and perhaps political prominence, repeatedly satirized as effeminate and a passive homosexual (*C.* 355, *WT* 235, 574 ff., *F.* 48)
- KLEON, leading Athenian politician of the 420s (died 422), a major target of Aristophanes' early plays (*C.* 549–50), including *Babylonians* (see Appendix); elected general twice but satirized as a corrupt, vulgar 'demagogue' (*C.* 581–91, *F.* 569–77)
- KLEONYMOS, minor Athenian politician, probably an associate of KLEON's in the 420s; mocked for alleged perjury (*C.* 400), aberrant sexual behaviour (*C.* 675–6), and cowardice in battle (*C.* 353–4); there is a joke about his 'wife' at *WT* 605
- KLEOPHON, a radical democratic Athenian politician in the later fifth century; a *bête noire* for some (*WT* 805), he proposed a dole for poorer citizens (cf. *F.* 140–2); satirized as of foreign birth (*F.* 678–82), possibly for reasons connected with his mother (his father had served as a general), and as 'pro-war' (*F.* 1532–3); a whole comedy about him, by Plato comicus, was staged at the same festival as *Frogs*
- KORINTH, major Greek city on the isthmus (with paved causeway for vehicles: *WT* 648) between the Peloponnese and central Greece; traditional enemy of Athens (*C.* 710); named after Korinthos, son of Zeus (n. on *F.* 439), its heroes included BELLEROPHON

KRONOS, a Titan, ruler of the gods in the era before ZEUS, his son and over-thrower (C. 905–6); reference to the period of his rule of the world could be used to denote things very primitive (C. 398, 929, 1070)

LAMACHOS, prominent Athenian general before and during the Peloponnesian War; treated retrospectively (after death in 414) as a heroic military figure (WT 841, F. 1039), though the etymology of his name ('very warlike') lends itself to punning

MARATHON, remote NE region of ATTIKA (F. 1296), site of famous Athenian victory over invading Persian army in 490 (C. 986, WT 806)

MUSES, nine daughters of ZEUS (F. 875) and Memory, goddesses of poetic and artistic inspiration (C. 334, 972, WT 41, F. 229, 356, fr. 348); Euripides' Muse is comically personified at F. 1306 ff.

MYSTERIES, Eleusinian, an initiatory cult of DEMETER and PERSEPHONE, centred on their sanctuary at Eleusis in NW ATTIKA (C. 302–4); initiates were offered the prospect of a happy afterlife (F. 154–8, 316 ff.)

NIGHT, sometimes personified as a quasi-divine entity (WT 1065, F. 1331–5), in keeping with her status as a primeval cosmic deity (e.g. Hesiod, *Theogony* 20, 107, 123, etc.)

NYMPHS, lesser female divinities or nature-spirits typically linked to mountains, rivers, etc. (C. 271, WT 326, F. 1344) and associated with such deities as PAN (WT 978) and DIONYSOS (WT 992)

OLYMPOS, mountain in Thessaly, traditional abode of Zeus and other major gods (C. 270, WT 1069) who are hence called 'Olympian' (C. 366, 817, WT 331–2, 960)

PALAMEDES, a Greek warrior at Troy, famed for his cleverness (F. 1451) but an enemy of Odysseus, who had him condemned to death on a trumped-up charge of treachery, after which Palamedes' brother Oiax sent a message to their father scratched on oars which floated across the sea (WT 769–84)

PALLAS, a cult title of ATHENA (C. 300, 967, 1265, WT 1136)

PAN, a god of the wilds, associate of NYMPHS (WT 978) and often depicted with the lower body of a goat and playing reed-pipes (F. 230)

PANATHENAIA, major Athenian festival in honour of ATHENA, celebrated in midsummer with much public feasting (C. 386) and various athletic events (C. 988, F. 1090); its procession (C. 69, WT 811–12), depicted on the Parthenon frieze, culminated on the AKROPOLIS

PARNASSOS, large mountain (F. 1057) whose southern slope overlooks Delphi; occupied in winter by Dionysos (C. 603–6, F. 1212)

PERIKLES, major political leader at Athens from c.460 to 429; member of aristocratic Alkmaionid family (cf. n. on C. 46); served frequently as general (C. 213, 859) and pursued imperial policy of establishing cleruchies (cf. C. 203); known as 'the Olympian' for his impressive rhetorical style (A. 530)

- PERSEPHONE, also known as Pherrephatta (*WT* 287, *F.* 671), daughter of DEMETER and consort of PLOUTON; with her mother she was worshipped in the MYSTERIES and THESMOPHORIA (*WT* 101, 282, etc.)
- PHAIDRA, wife of Theseus; her adulterous passion for her stepson Hippolytos was a prime subject for tragedy (*WT* 153), including two versions of *Hippolytos* by Euripides (*WT* 497, 547, 550, *F.* 1043, 1052)
- PHOIBOS, lit. 'radiant', traditional title of APOLLO (*C.* 595, *WT* 109, 112, 128, *F.* 754)
- PLOUTON, god of the underworld, HADES (*F.* 163, 432, 784); the name was sometimes connected with *ploutos*, 'wealth' (cf. fr. 504)
- POSEIDON, brother of ZEUS and a major Olympian deity; god of the sea (*WT* 322, *F.* 665–7) and horses (*C.* 83)
- PRYTANEIS (SING. PRYTANIS), members of the standing committee of the COUNCIL, responsible for presiding at its meetings and those of the ASSEMBLY, each Athenian tribe's fifty representatives serving for a prytany (a tenth of the year); they were the first port of call for much official business (*WT* 654, 764, 854, 923 ff.)
- PYTHIAN (adj.), equivalent to 'Delphic' with reference to APOLLO's oracular shrine at Delphi (*WT* 332–3); the shrine itself can be called 'Pytho' (*F.* 659)
- SOKRATES (469–399), Athenian philosopher; mentor of CHAIREPHON; his popular reputation for esoteric intellectualism is reflected at *F.* 1491 as well as throughout *Clouds*
- SOPHOKLES (c. 496–406), major tragic playwright (*F.* 787–94, 1516), father of Iophon (*F.* 73–9); he died shortly after Euripides (cf. *F.* 76); had reputation for mildness of character (*F.* 82, 788–90)
- SPARTA, leading city of Peloponnese and head of military league at war with the Athenian empire 431–404 (*C.* 186, 214–18); in mythology, the home of Helen (*WT* 860); its core territory was Lakonia (cf. *C.* 186, *WT* 142, 423)
- TELEPHOS, mythical king of Mysia (in Asia Minor), wounded by Achilles during aborted first Greek expedition against Troy. Later came to Argos and, disguised as beggar (*C.* 922, cf. *F.* 842), infiltrated the Greek assembly to deliver a speech in defence of the Mysians/Trojans. When his disguise was uncovered, he seized Agamemnon's baby son Orestes as hostage and made supplication at an altar. Euripides' play on the subject may have acquired some notoriety; it certainly appealed to Aristophanes' parodic imagination (*WT* 689 ff., *F.* 855, 864, cf. *A.* 430–556)
- THESMOPHORIA, a three-day women-only fertility festival in honour of DEMETER and PERSEPHONE; one location, the Thesmophorion (*WT* 83, 89), may have been on the AKROPOLIS; the women camped in tents (*WT* 624, 658), and their various rituals included a day of fasting (*WT* 949, 985, cf. 570) and a day called Kalligeneia (*WT* 300)
- XENOKLES, late 5th-century minor tragic poet (*WT* 169, 440–3, *F.* 86), son of Karkinos (see *C.* 1261)

ZEUS, son of KRONOS, supreme ruler of the gods (*C.* 2, 153, 563, *WT* 315, *F.* 1278) on OLYMPOS; father of, among others, DIONYSOS (*WT* 990, *F.* 216), the MUSES (*F.* 875), and HERAKLES (*C.* 1048–50); in origin a sky-god (*C.* 368–79, 1279–80, *F.* 246), wielder of thunderbolts (*C.* 397); his titles include ‘Saviour’ (*WT* 1009, *F.* 738) and ‘paternal/ancestral’ (*C.* 1468); he frequently experiences sexual desire for human women (*C.* 1080–1)